JUNE 1988

COMMODORE USER

No1 For AMIGA GAMES

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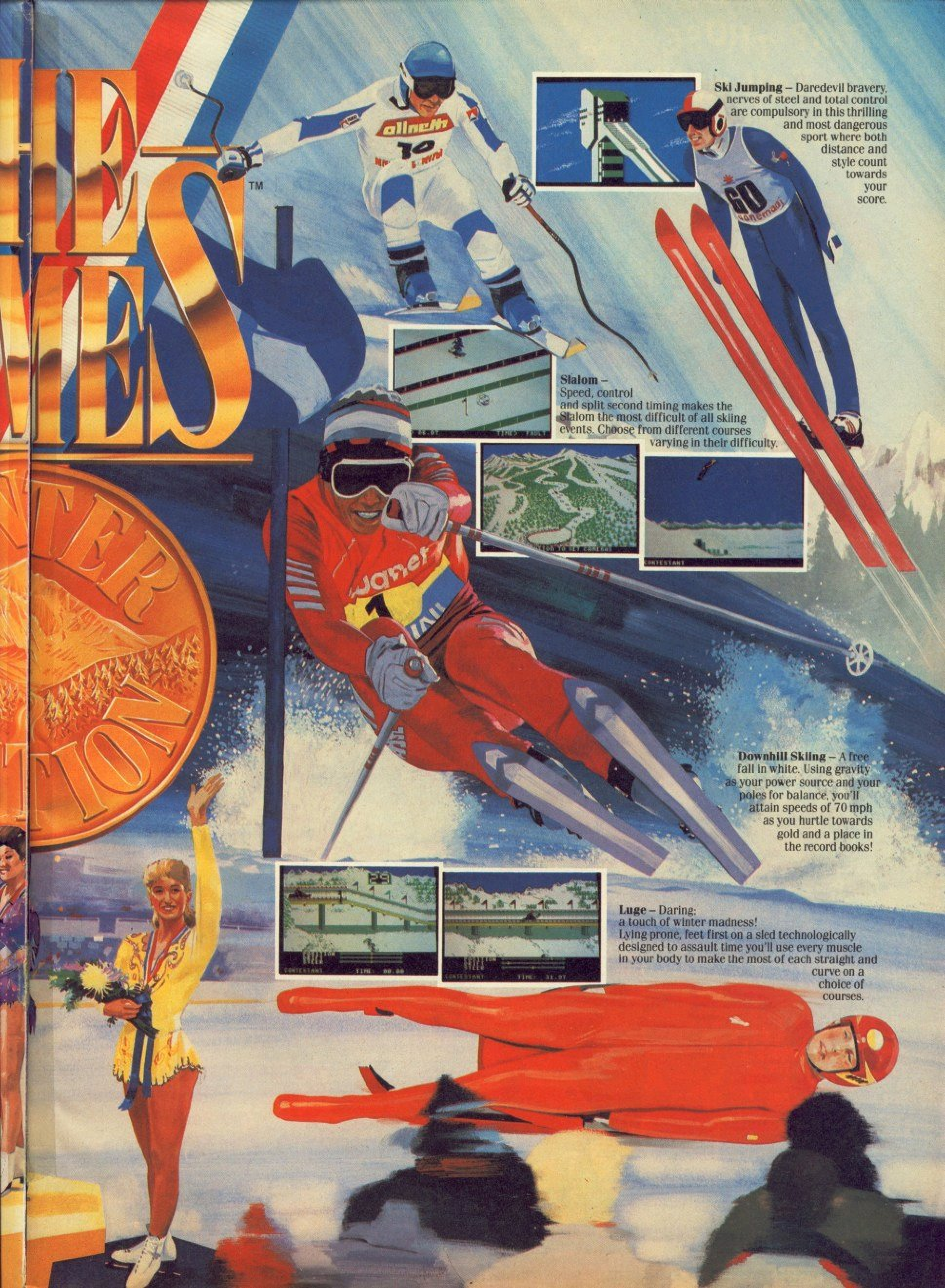
REVIEWED: DREAM WARRIOR, INFILTRATOR II, HOPPIN' MAD, GAMES WINTER EDITION

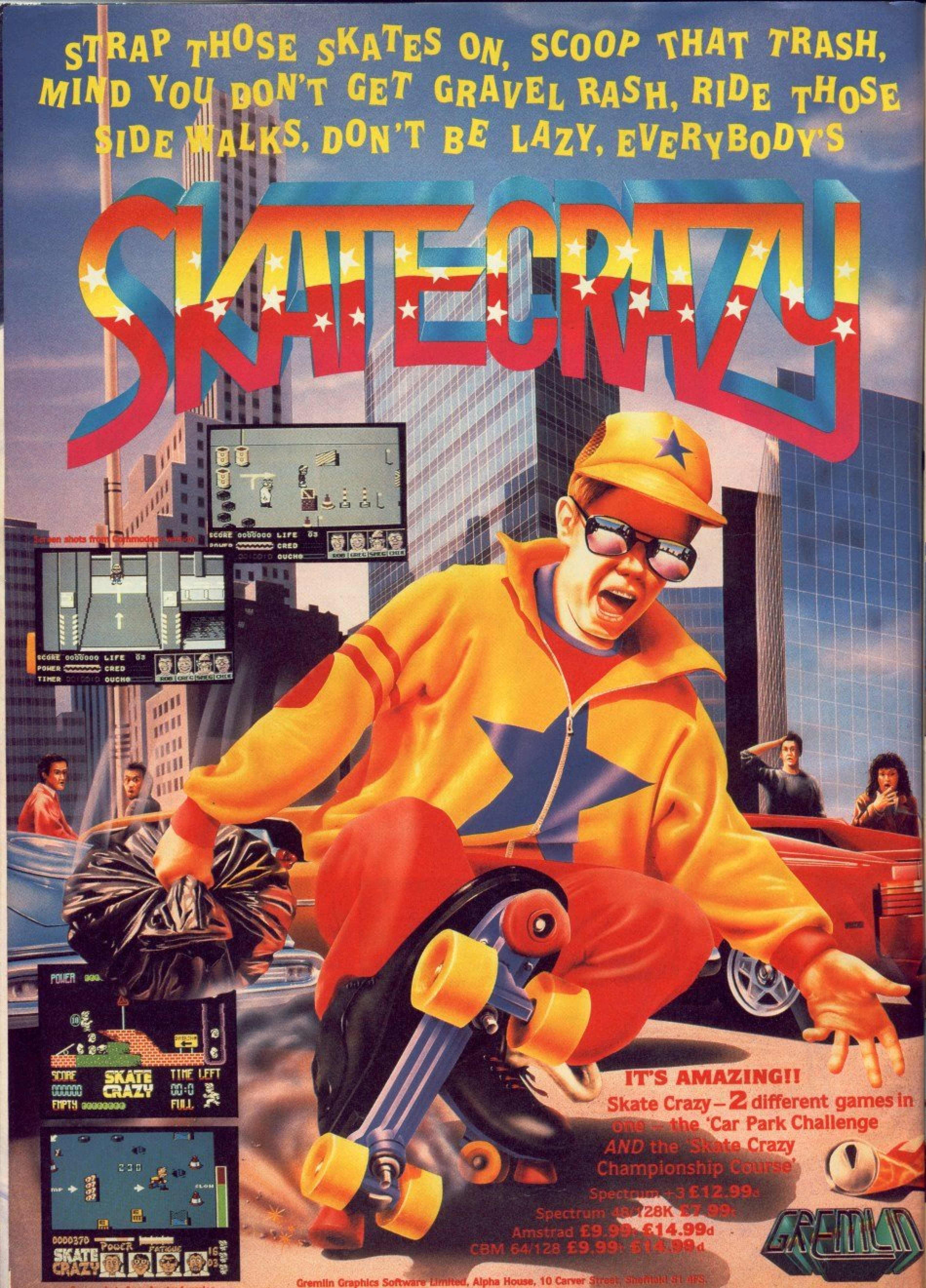
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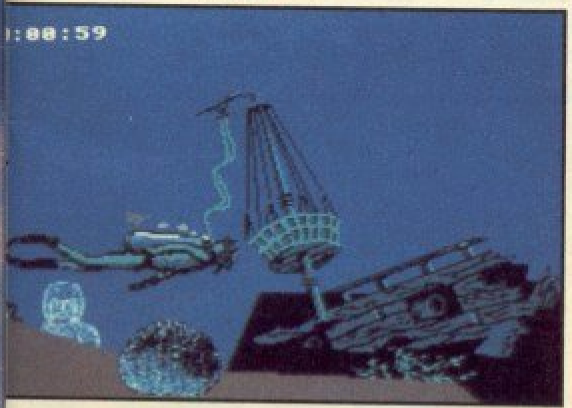


STRAP THOSE SKATES ON, SCOOP THAT TRASH, MIND YOU DON'T GET GRAVEL RASH, RIDE THOSE SIDE WALKS, DON'T BE LAZY, EVERYBODY'S
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Screen shots from Commodore version
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CU Contents

Specials





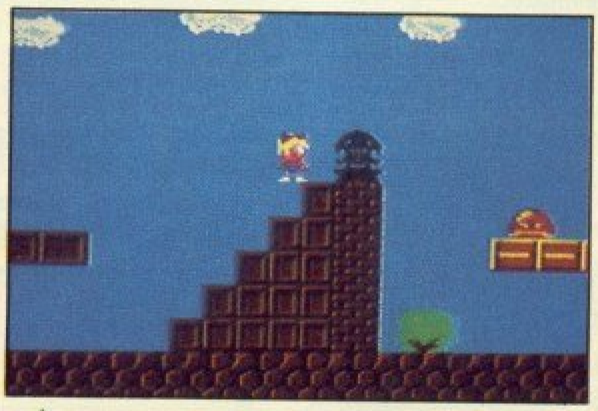
Return to Atlantis *bubbles up.*

Dead Angle — *gangland violence in the arcades.*



68,368
Jul-Dec 1987

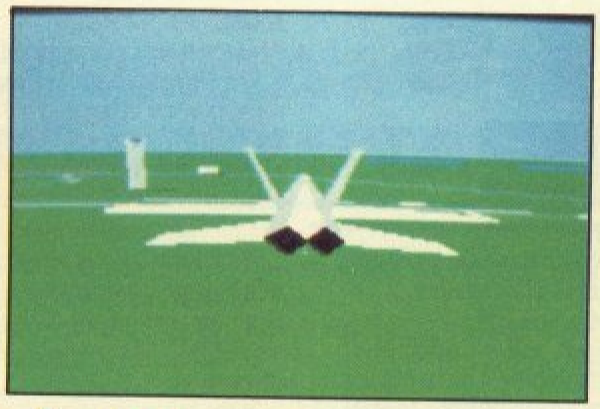
ABC
MEMBER OF THE AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS



Cute as they come, the Great Giana Sisters.



Wizball — *the return of the split pea.*



FA/18 Interceptor *blows us away.*

Editor — Mike Pattenden; Deputy Editor — Gary Penn; Staff Writer — Nick Kelly; Art Editor — Elaine Bishop; Advertising Manager — Mark Scriven; Classified/Copy Control — Angela Smart; Publisher — Terry Pratt; Editorial/Advertising — 01-251 6222; Back Issues/Distribution — EMAP Frontline Limited, 1 Lincoln Court, Lincoln Road, Peterborough PE1 2RP Tel: 0733 555161; Subscriptions — PO Box 500, Leicester LE99 0AA Tel: 0858 34567; Annual Subs. (UK) £15; Europe — £24; World — £38. Registered Offices: Priory Court 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. ISS 0265-721X.

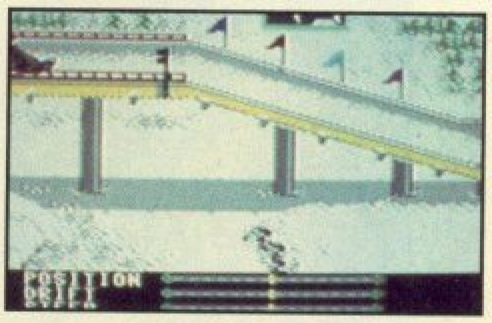
Cover Illustration: Philip Bond

Regulars

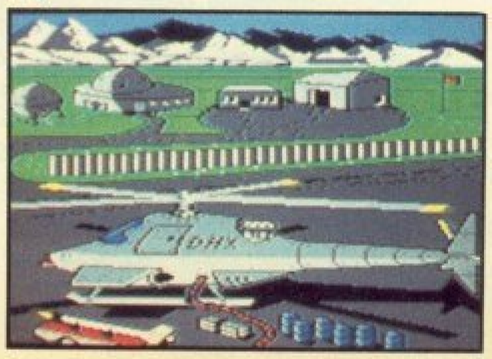
Screen Scene



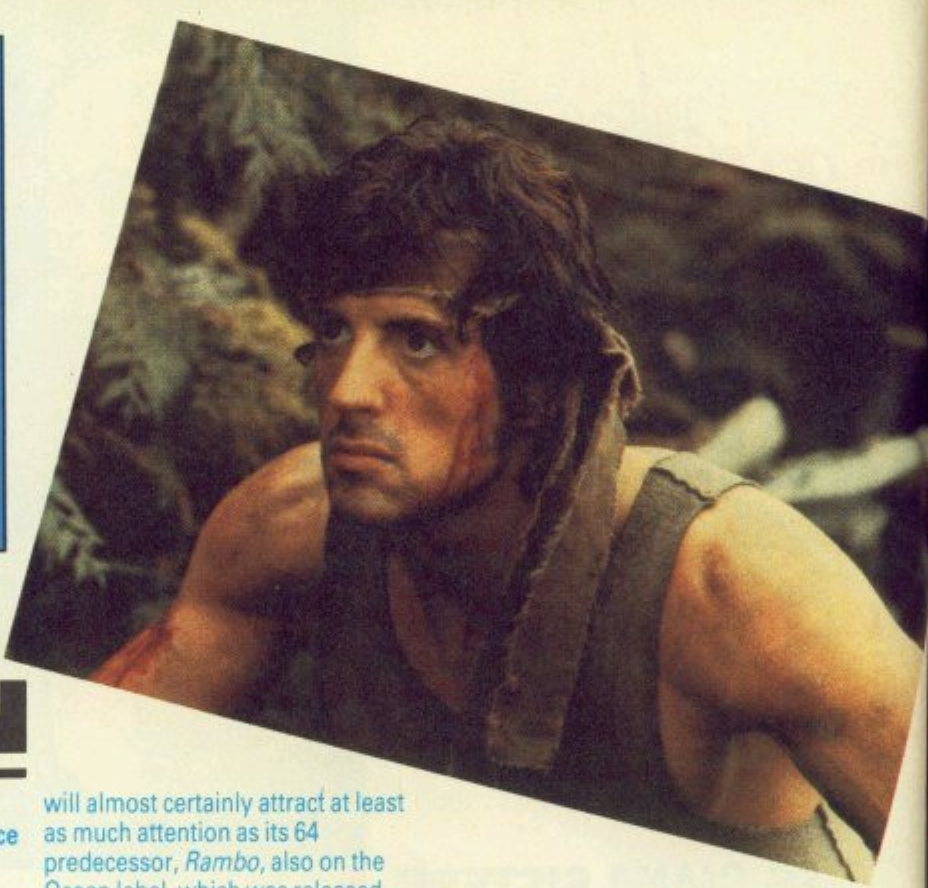
A treat in store for Sinbad.



Jimbo McGibbets is back in Infiltrator II.



BUZZ



RAMBO III FOR OCEAN

Although the third in the enormously popular "Rambo" series of films has only just been completed, and is not due for release in the US until later this summer, reliable sources have confirmed that Ocean Software have already snapped up the licence for conversion to the home computer market.

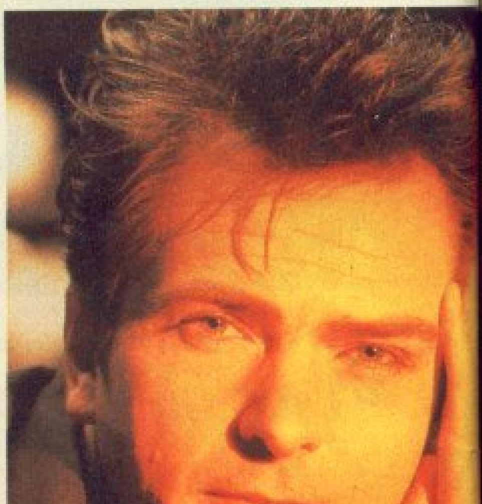
With a projected Autumn release date, and no doubt destined to be massive at the box office, *Rambo III* will almost certainly attract at least as much attention as its 64 predecessor, *Rambo*, also on the Ocean label, which was released back in Christmas '85. And for those who can't wait to check out "Cuddly" Sly Stallone in his latest manifestation, here's a little pic of the man himself in a typically, erm, *meaningful* pose.



DALEY'S GAME

Ocean software are to release a game featuring top decathlete and Lucozade guzzler, Daley Thompson. *Daley Thompson '88* is scheduled for release in September, coinciding with the beginning of the Seoul Olympics in which Daley will be attempting to be the first man in history to win three Olympic gold medals for the Decathalon. Apparently, you will play the great man himself, and will attempt all the events that he'll be trying in real life. There's even talk of a special chart being included in the packaging to allow you to follow Daley's progress through the games.

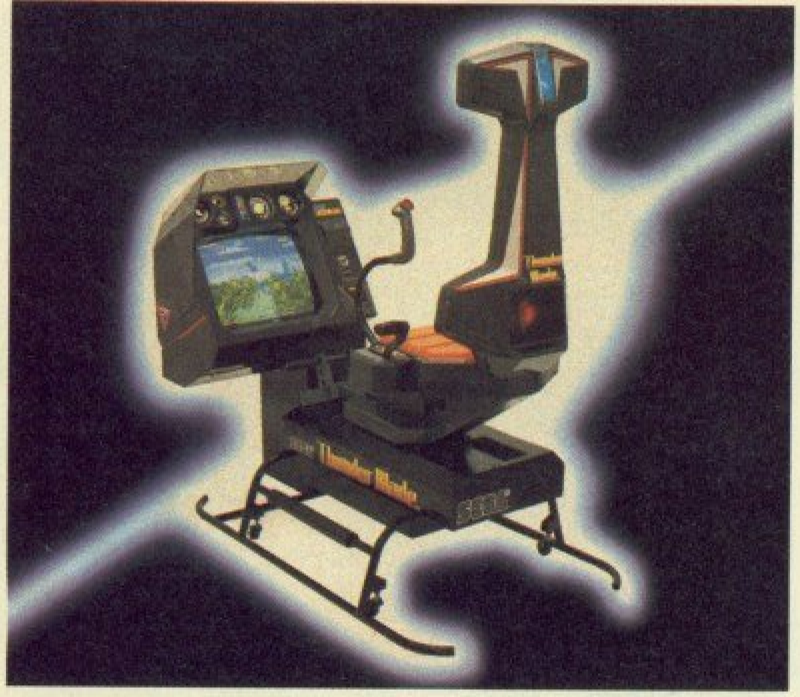
GABRIEL DONATES SONG TO RACE



Code Masters' forthcoming game for Sport Aid, *The Race Against Time*, will feature Peter Gabriel's classic "Games Without Frontiers" on the soundtrack. That Gabriel should be the pop star to contribute a song to this cause seems particularly appropriate: this seminal performer's interest in and concern for world peace and justice goes back many years. Among other things, he's toured in aid of Amnesty International, organised and funded the World Of Music And Dance festival which has been responsible for bringing the music of many third world performers to a wider audience, and has been a tireless fighter for justice in South Africa, having written perhaps the most powerful anti-apartheid song of all, "Biko" (last heard on the soundtrack of Richard Attenborough's "Cry Freedom").

The 64 version of *The Race Against Time* is lagging behind some of the other formats (it seems not even world hunger can bring about a simultaneous release of a product across all formats), but Code Master's Bruce Everiss figures that this most worthwhile of computer games should be available to Commodore owners towards the end of July.

In the meantime, those nice people at Virgin Records have given us five copies of Gabriel's last, hugely successful LP "So", which we'll pass on to the first five people whose names are pulled out of the tri-cornered hat and who can tell us what connection the noble Peter has with Phil "Receding" Collins. **Answers, on a postcard, to Gabriel Compo, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.**



THUNDERBLADE GOES GOLD

The battle for Christmas Number one this year looks to be hotting up with the news that US Gold have just acquired a strong rival to Activision's *Afterburner* in the shape of the brilliant Sega helicopter combat game, *Thunderblade*. With marginally slower gameplay than its manic opposition, *Thunderblade* has, nevertheless, got many graphic similarities to *Afterburner*, and it will be fascinating to see which of these two software giants can make a better fist of converting this kind of coin-op wizardry for the home market.

Incidentally, arcade-goers may be interested to know that the upright version of *Thunderblade* is now on release and, while, it won't be quite as thrilling as sitting in the incredible "hovering" hydraulic console, your local arcade proprietor may find it more financially sensible to stock than its big brother.

PIRANHA LICENCES UP FOR GRABS

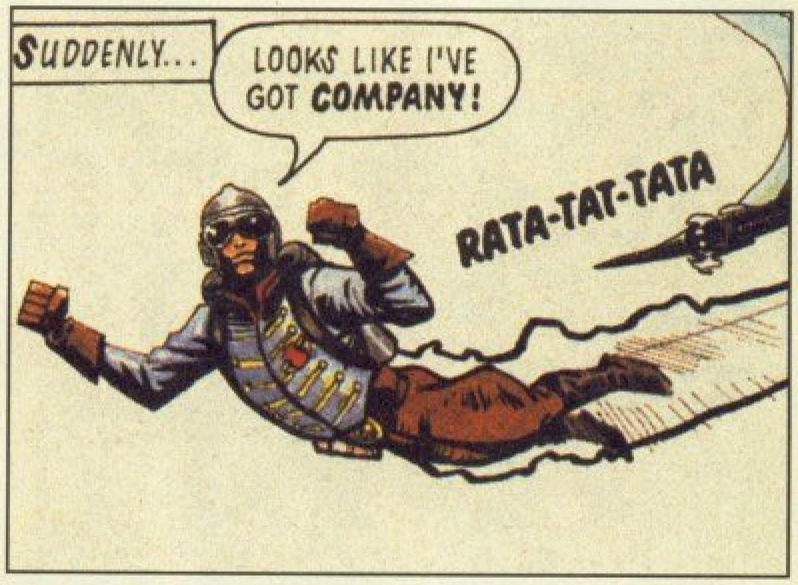
Piranha software, a subsidiary of the MacMillan publishing group, are to cease trading. According to a spokesperson, the decision was taken by MacMillan that, while their overall experience in the market had been a successful one, they were not prepared to continue operating as a "small fish in a big pond", nor were they prepared to engage in the level of investment that would be necessary to become a major software publisher.

But what of their three major licences, *Roy Of The Rovers*, *Judge Death* and *Halo Jones*? Well, it seems that an arrangement has been arrived at whereby they all are to revert to original licence holder Fleetway. And, with *Roy* reputedly finished, *Judge Death* not far behind and the wonderful *Halo Jones* being just one of the most swoonsome comic characterw we can think of, it looks like there's a definite opening for some canny software house to step in and scoop the lot.

SILVER ARCADE SEQUEL

After the critical and popular success of last year's *Arcade Classics* (a CU Cheapo Of The Month), Silverbird have announced their plans to release a follow-up, featuring another four arcade greats of yesteryear at a staggeringly cheap price. The games to be featured are likely to be *Frogger*, *Galaxian*, *Defender* and *Missile Command*, and the package will retail for £1.99.

Meanwhile cult Silverbird programmer Ubik (remember last year's *Ubik's Music* "nobhead" controversy?) has come up with a brilliant new cheapo which should be hitting softshelves throughout the land in the not-too-distant future. *All Terrain Gardener* puts you in the wellies of a cutsey old greenthumb who has to rescue an array of plants and flowers before they're drowned. With no weapon but a trowel and horde of killer bees to thwart you, this sounds like just the thing for those dull Sunday afternoons.



CINEMAWARE COMIC STARS

Mirrorsoft-distributed software house Cinemaware have scored something of a coup by managing to get comic strips of two of their products included in two of the hottest, hippest comics in the market.

Strips of *The Three Stooges* have featured in recent editions of the anarchic kiddies snot'n'schlock comic Oink, while 2000AD has put a page of the adventures of that camp-ish anti-Nazi superhero Rocket ranger on the back page of their August publication.

Whateve next — a *Wizball* strip in Shoot? Or perhaps Elvin Mindbender editing Just Seventeen's problem page? Only time will tell . . .

BUZZ

Sensisoccer Sensation: **Following last month's Buzz piece on Sensible Software's unique "highest bidder" approach to releasing the new football game they've been working on, the talented long-haired programming team have been deluged with offers from various deep-pocketed software houses, eager to snap up the product for release on their labels. Negotiations are reputed to be at an advanced stage and, all going well, this as-yet-untitled footie game should hit the streets around the start of the new season in September, not for the European championships as was first reported.**

Elite Cheapos: **Elite plunge into the cut-price market with the just-announced launch of a budget label, Encore. The products, retailing at £1.99, will be drawn from Elite's back catalogue and will include such games as *Ghosts'n'Goblins, Commando* and *Airwolf.* First release, out nowabouts, will be *Frank Bruno's Boxing.***

Bruno Booked: **A further addition to the "galaxy" of "stars" scheduled to be in attendance at the 11th Official Commodore Show at the Novotel, Hammersmith has been announced. The latest recruit to the line-up, which already includes Tessa Saunderson, Adam Faith(!), and Chelsea football "greats"(!), is cheery Radio One drivetime DJ Bruno Brooks. Truly, our cups runneth over.**

Interstellar Fleet: **Interstel, the American strategy games specialists distributed over here by Electronic Arts, have announced the launch of a new series of games to be known as the Fleet series. The first product in the series is *Star Fleet I*, a space battle simulation on both 64 and Amiga, which puts you in charge of the 36 galactic heavy cruisers protecting the outer regions of the alliance from invading Krellan and Zaldron Imperial warships, with starbases to be rescued, enemy vessels to be captured, mines to be laid, intruders to be sought and damaged systems to be reported.**

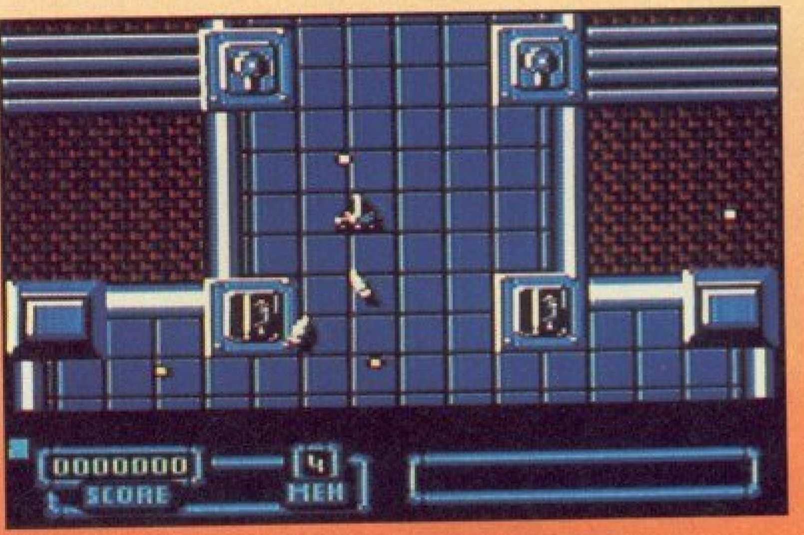
Fil In: **French Software house FIL, who are now operating in this country too, have managed to pick up some really hot arcade licences for conversion. Hottest is perhaps Sega's red-hot SHINOBI, reviewed some months back in CU's arcades section. And FIL have also picked up conversion rights for a new SNK title, PADDLE MANIA.**





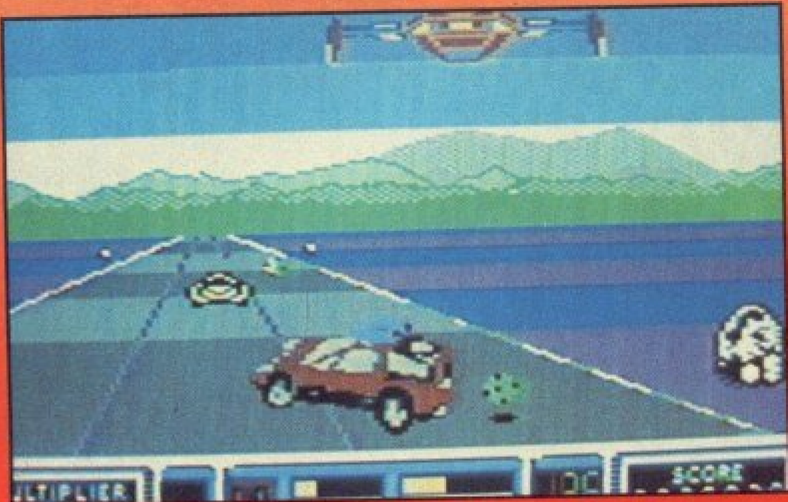
LAST
NINJA 2
Back with a Vengeance!
Born in a time of peace, lived in the time of war; the shadow warrior returns. Leaping the abyss of time he comes to fulfil his destiny!
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BUZZ



BATTLECAR MARAUDER

Well! To think that that charming young Mark Kelly fellow from pomp-rockers Marillion who so kindly played *Combat School* in the arcades for CU last year, has actually taken time off to program a vertically-scrolling blastabout! And to think that canny softhouse Hewson have picked up the rights and are going to release said product, crammed to the brim with Molotov cocktails, winder missiles and (quote) "variable intensity lasers" later this month! Well, we . . . (*actually, Buzz, I think you'll find that this particular Mark Kelly is a totally separate one from the BOF Marillion geezer, and don't you think perhaps you've been imbibing too much of that curious liquid in the Byte & Ballcock . . . — Ed*)



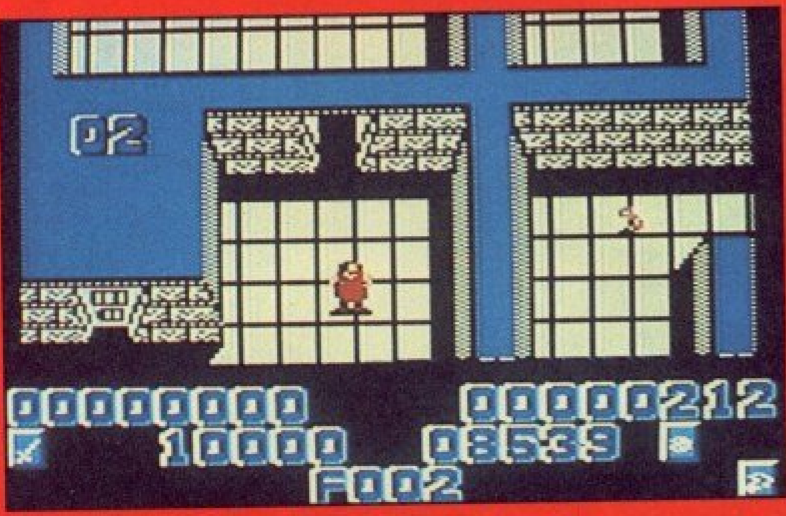
ROADBLASTERS

Though only moderately successful in the arcades, US Gold's home conversion of *Roadblasters*, due out any day now, promises to be a big 'un. For a start, it'll have all the considerable weight of US Gold's promotional team behind it, as this is their current priority game. And secondly, the combination of driving and shoot 'em up action that the arcade game provided seems far more convertible to us than the more exotic pure driving coin-ops that have been emerging over the last eighteen months or so, games like, for example, *Out Run*. We mean to say, there's only so much you can do on the 64 with a car, but strap a cannon on top of it, well *now* you're talking.



THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

With their incredibly successful *Star Wars* still riding high in the charts six months after its release, Domark have just announced the impending release of *The Empire Strikes Back* in which you control Luke Skywalker's snowspeeder and Han Solo's Millenium Falcon as they blast through probots, imperial walkers, TIE fighters and asteroid fields to the safety of the giant asteroid. Programmed by the same team as brought you its illustrious predecessor, this classic slice of vector graphic violence will be with you in late July.

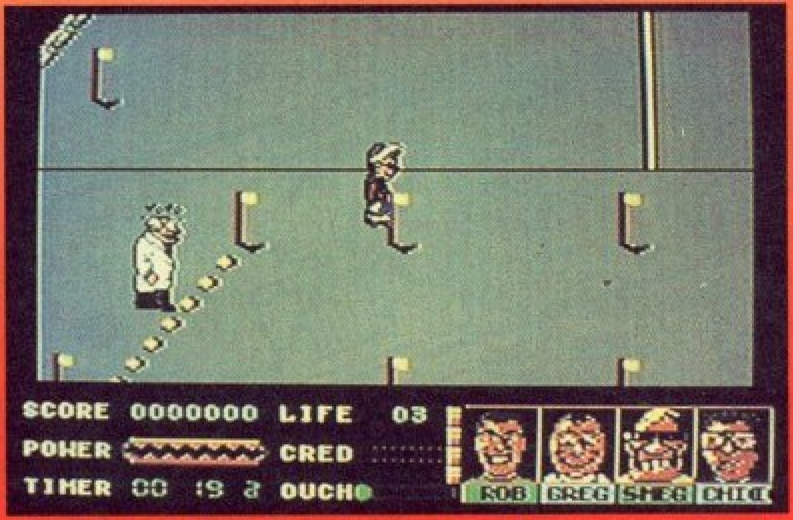


SHACKLED

Though most of you won't ever have heard of *Shackled* in the arcades, this was in fact a brief supporting actor on the coin-op stage. With an appearance perhaps not a squillion miles away from *Gauntlet* . . . well, OK, v. similar indeed, *Shackled* set you the task of wandering through increasingly convoluted mazes releasing comrades imprisoned in cells, topping the nasty guards and exiting the level with rescued mates safely in tow. With plenty of coins, weapons and keys to pick up and lots of panic-stricken rushing about (especially when you open a cell door and discover that instead of containing a thankful prisoner it's chockers with ghouls), Go!'s conversion of this Data East coin-op cult hit (read "flop") will be out at the end of May.

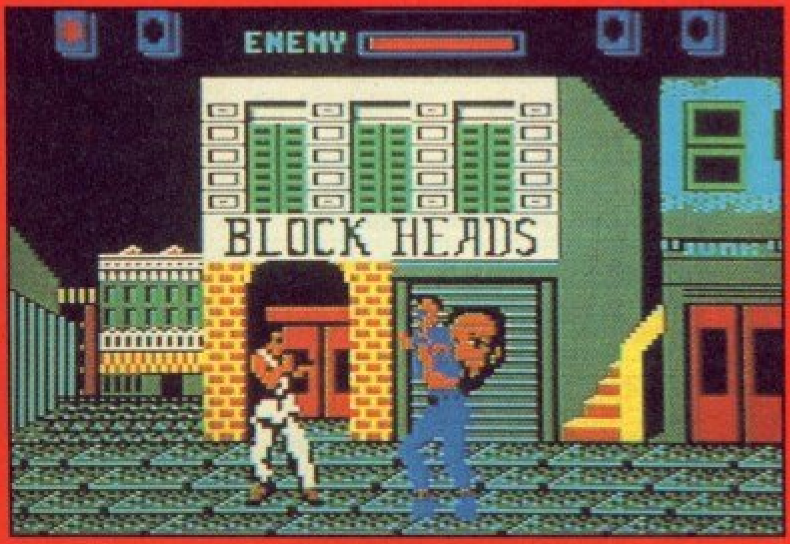
SKATE CRAZY

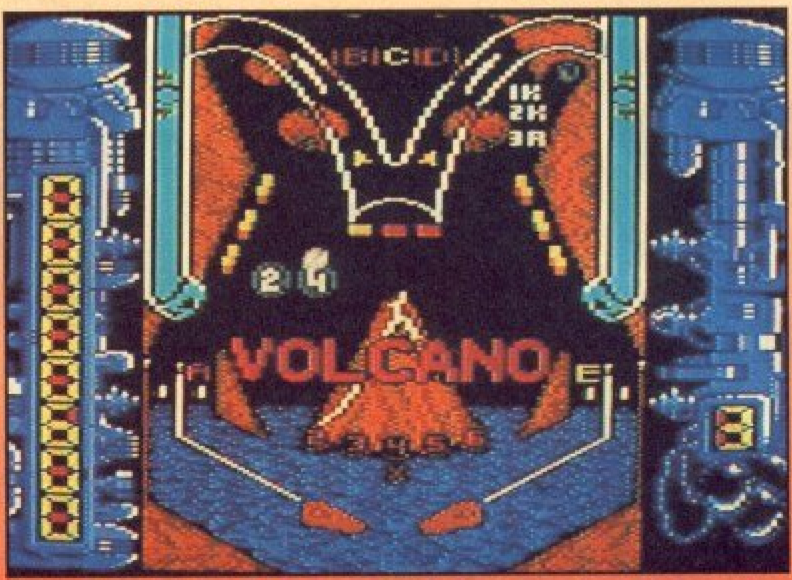
A double A-side computer game? Well, that's what Gremlin's forthcoming roller-skating sim looks like to us. You get a choice of guiding hero Freddy around Side A's multi-storey car park (viewed from the typical *Skate or Die* perspective) or Side B's horizontally scrolling subways 'n' streets. As with all these streetwise modes of transport the object is not so much to get from A to B but to do so in style, and the part of your anatomy most susceptible to bruising when you have a mishap is not your bot but your ego. Yup, credibility points are what you need to survive and thrive in this game, so stay upright, pull as many groovy stunts as you can and enjoy.



STREET FIGHTER

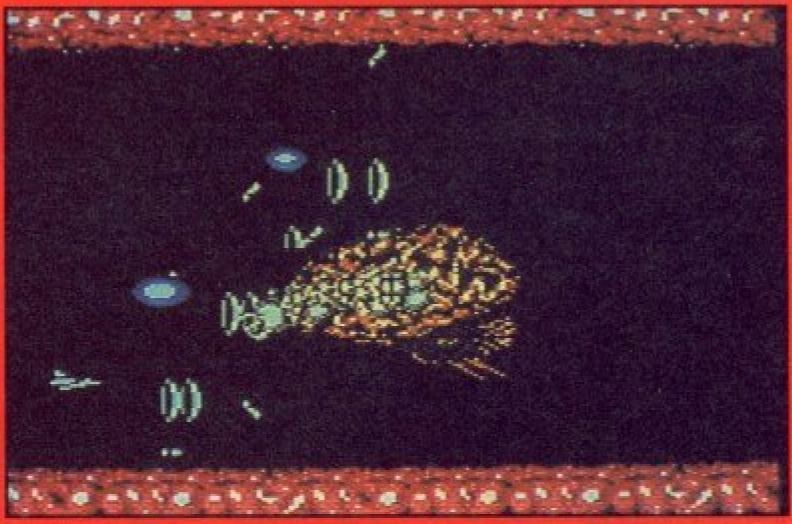
1987 would have gone down as a whitewash for Taito in the coin-op beat 'em up stakes, had it not been for Capcom's surprisingly brilliant *Street Fighter*. Featuring some of the biggest sprites ever seen on screen this magnificent slab of personal combat pitted your hero against a variety of skilled and tough opponents from around the world, each fighting with their own distinctive style, and each taking you on in their own neighbourhood. Now, as part of their comprehensive licensing tie-up with the Japanese company, Go! are set to bring you *Street Fighter* on the 64. It'll be no easy task, but if they succeed, this could become *the* king of the home beat 'em ups. Release is scheduled for the beginning of July.





TIME SCANNER

As promised by us a couple of months back, living room pinball can soon be yours, courtesy of Activision and their forthcoming conversion of Sega's *Time Scanner*. With both incredibly realistic pinball-style action and some decidedly surreal extras, such as "time chambers" into which the ball can be propelled, *Time Scanner* was a bit unlucky not to have become an arcade biggie. Perhaps the hard-core pinball freaks just couldn't get used to the thrills and spills without the distinctive *crack* of metal against glass; perhaps non-pinball freaks simply didn't appreciate the brilliantly reproduced "look and feel" of the real thing. You'll have your chance to make up your own mind, come its October release date.



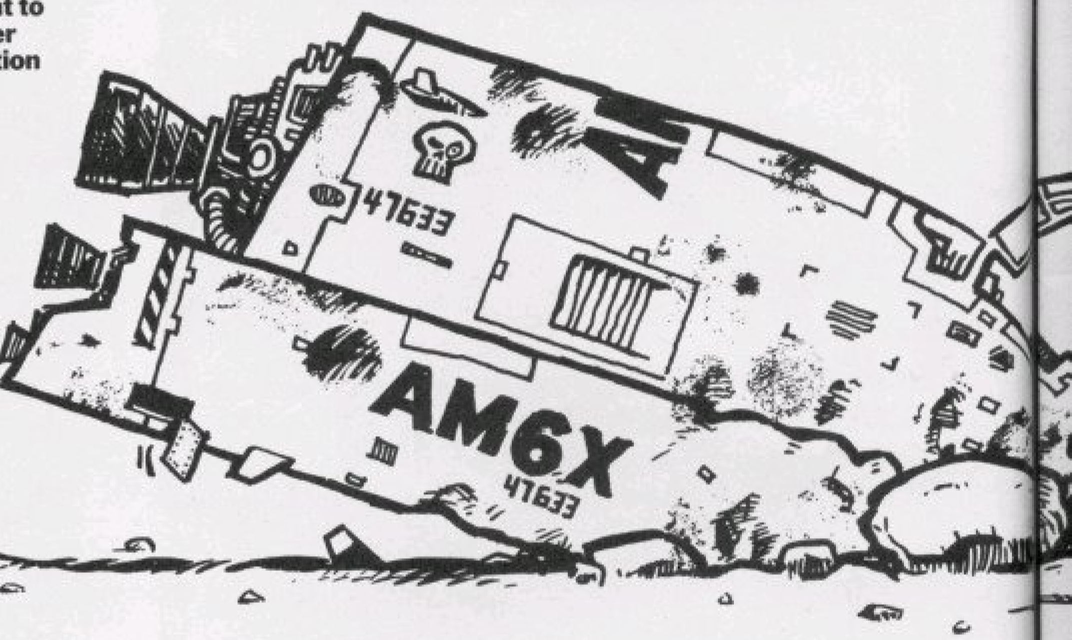
SALAMANDER

***Salamander*, as any fule kno, was the arcade sequel to Konami's very wonderful *Nemesis*, and enhanced the blistering original with a two-player-onscreen-at-once feature, new weapons and even more gruesome aliens. Now, those with memories which stretch back further than a year (to April '87, to be precise) will remember all the hue and cry that accompanied the release by Konami of the 64 version of *Nemesis*, a shoot 'em up wonderous enough to be featured on CU's cover. So we wouldn't be at all surprised if *Salamander*, with graphics by the self-same Bob Stevenson who did the needful for *Nemesis* (and, latterly, the splendiferous *Io*), and released this time by Ocean who've cunningly negotiated the rights from Konami, happened to be a CU cover star too . . .**

CHARTS

After last month's very poor showing of full-price in the charts (6/20), this month's top twenty shows something of a resurgence for the £9.99-ers with nearly half the positions being filled by them. Both Ocean's *Target Renegade* and Quicksilva's *Pacland* make strong showings. Poll position, nevertheless, is still held by a cheapo, this time *Steve Davis' Snooker* being the numero uno, consigning last month's top dog *Ghostbusters* to second place. And, judging by the real dearth of new quality software produced this month for the 64, the trend towards low-price quantity and away from higher price quality seems destined to continue.

Psygnosis' much-publicised *Obliterator* flies straight to the top of the Amiga top ten, with a whole rake of other quality new releases following close behind. A prediction for next month? Well, we can't see anything keeping office time-waste fave *Wizball* away from the top. As for the adventure charts, the only really notable development is the entry of the *Time And Magik* collection from new boys Mandarin Software, straight in at number five.



C64 CHART

TM	LM		
1	5	STEVE DAVIS SNOOKER	BLUE RIBBON
2	1	GHOSTBUSTERS	MASTERTRONIC
3	NE	WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS	OCEAN
4	NE	TARGET RENEGADE	OCEAN
5	NE	PAC-LAND	QUICKSILVA
6	12	TRAP DOOR	ALTERNATIVE
7	8	FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS
8	NE	10 GREAT GAMES 2	GREMLIN
9	4	EXPLODING FIST	MASTERTRONIC
10	14	IKARI WARRIORS	ELITE
11	3	PLATOON	OCEAN
12	18	DAN DARE	MASTERTRONIC
13	17	GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS
14	13	BMX KIDS	FIREBIRD
15	10	KIK START 2	MASTERTRONIC
16	NE	TOP TEN COLLECTION	ELITE
17	9	OUT RUN	US GOLD
18	RE	BMX SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS
19	2	PREDATOR	ACTIVISION
20	16	POPEYE	ALTERNATIVE

READERS COIN-OP CHART

TM	LM	
1	1	OUT RUN
2	2	AFTERBURNER
3	3	DOUBLE DRAGON
4	5	R-TYPE
5	NE	HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMP

No changes in the top three, but a new entry for Sega's brilliant punch-up. Perhaps its appearance is due to the fact that, with summer looming, arcade owners stocking up with the best of the newest, and coin-op fans getting their first real chance to check 'em out.

Send your top fives, to Readers Coin-op Chart, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

TOP TEN NAFF HOLIDAYS

1	Ten toilet paperless nights in an Athens youth hostel.
2	September in a leaky boat on the Norfolk Broads.
3	Spot-the-Spaniard with your next door neighbour in Torremolinos.
4	A timeshare in Beirut.
5	Cruising in the Straits of Hormuz.
6	Blackpool in February.
7	Blackpool in August.
8	Eight months in a Russian space station.
9	A fishing trip to Walthamstow reservoir.
10	Cycling on the Gaza Strip.

S



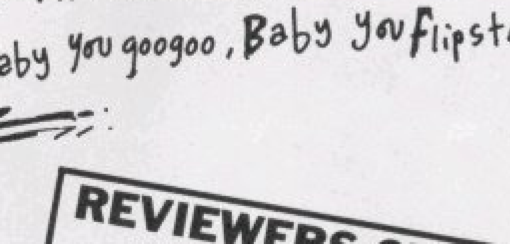
ADVENTURE CHART

TM	LM		
1	1	DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	MIRRORSOFT
2	RE	JACK THE RIPPER	CRL
3	4	GUILD OF THIEVES	RAINBIRD
4	3	LORDS OF CONQUEST	ELECTRONIC ARTS
5	NE	TIME AND MAGIK	MANDARIN
6	RE	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
7	RE	KILLED UNTIL DEAD	US GOLD
8	RE	RIGELS REVENGE	MASTERTRONIC
9	2	BARD'S TALE 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS
10	6	GNOME RANGER	LEVEL 9

REVIEWERS CHOICE

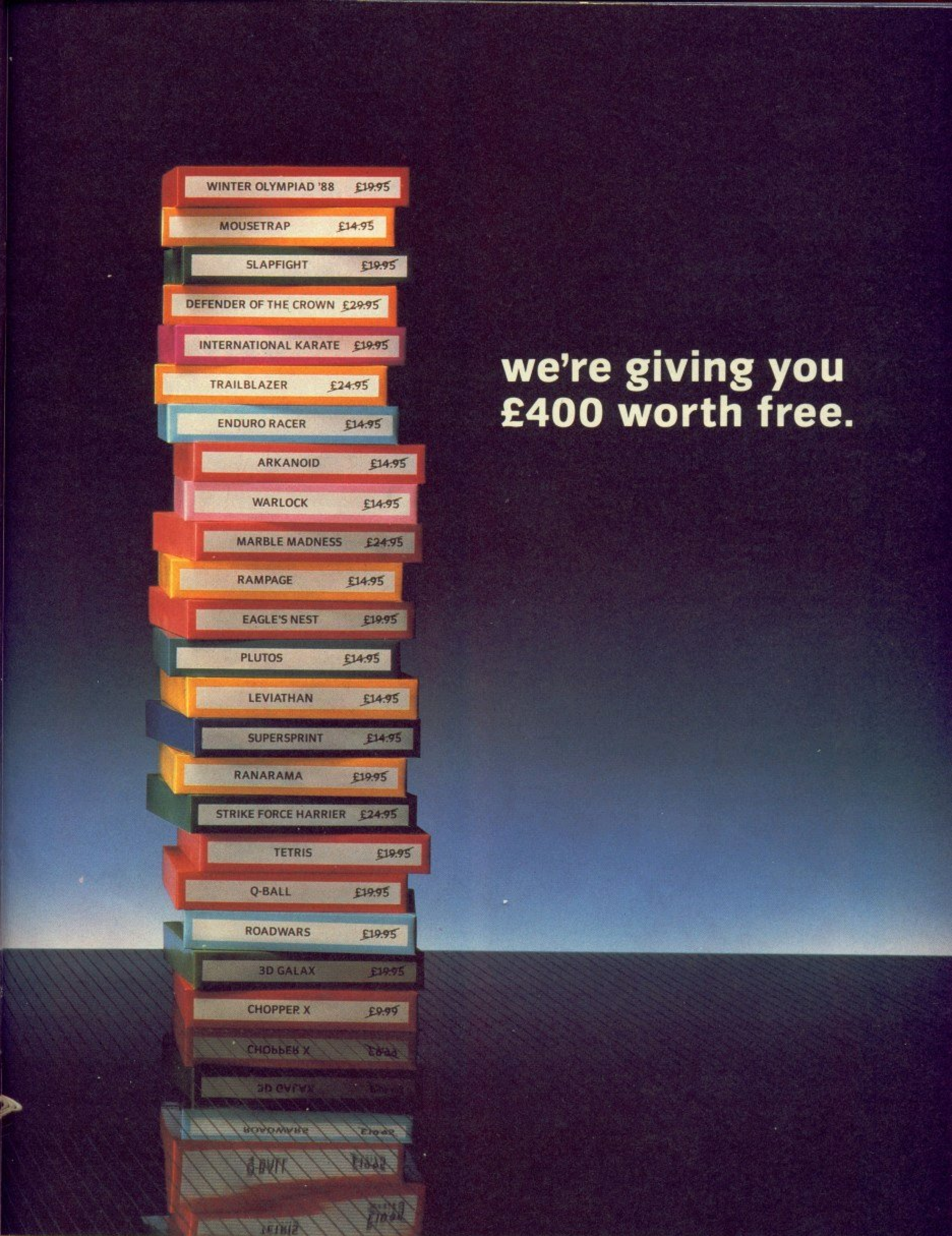
CU's Sunny June faves.

The Ed: FA/18 Interceptor (Amiga), Great Giana Sisters (64), playing tennis on a Sunday morn.
Rockin' Gaz: Chubby Gristle (Amiga), Wizball (Amiga), Bionic Commandos (64), FA/18 Interceptor (Amiga).
Nick Kelly: Wizball (Amiga), Sidewinder (Amiga), Vindicators (Arcades), winning games of tennis on Sunday morns.
Mark Patterson: Patton And Rommel (64), The Three Stooges (Amiga), Stomach butterfly catching (GCSE's).



AMIGA CHART

TM	LM		
1	NE	OBLITERATOR	PSYGNOSIS
2	2	FERRARI FORMULA 1	ELECTRONIC ARTS
3	5	SIDEWINDER	MASTERTRONIC
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C.U. Screen Star

The last great old arcade classic still to appear in any shape or form in the home computer market is *Super Mario Bros.* Anyone who wanted a classic taste of the ingenious platform game had to go out and buy a Nintendo console — and who wants one of them? You couldn't even find a clone for heaven's sake. Until now that is. Behind the tongue-in-cheek title of Rainbow Arts' latest game is a highly playable *Super Mario* replica.

Despite a lousy package illustration and loading screen *GGS* retains all the features that made the Nintendo game so addictive, so much so that when the insert says "We recommend that after playing this game continuously for several days you take a break for at least ten minutes", you can believe it.

GGS covers thirty-two levels of really tough jumping and dodging that will take you and one of the sisters on a quest for a large magic diamond. The levels are relatively short compared to the original, but they have all the neat touches it contained including hidden warps, the ability to run across the top of the screen, and bonus levels concealed down holes.

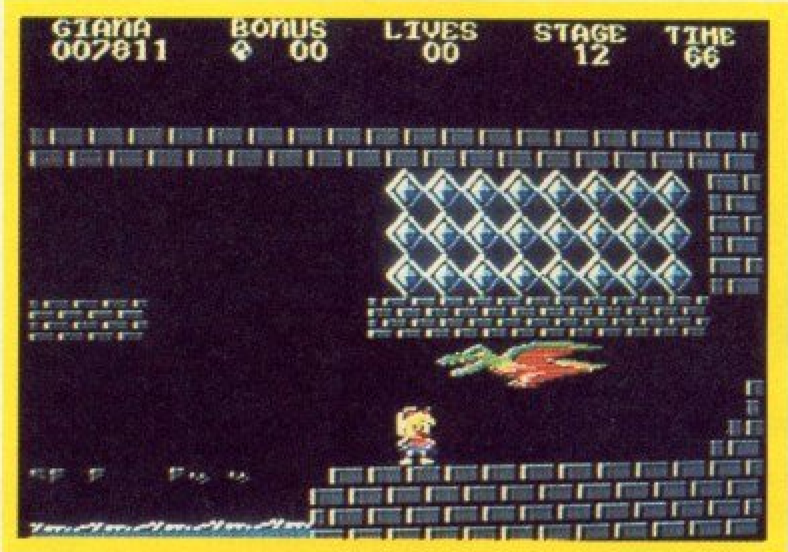
There are plenty of extra powers to be found as well. These build up (if you can keep the same life) from a punk hairdo that lets her nut walls, to bouncing dreambubbles which take out nasties, a clock which freezes the nasties and a lolli (sic) which will give you an extra life. Collecting the trail of diamonds along the way will give you an extra life eventually, too. You can't hang around making sure you've collected them all though, there's a 90-second time limit.

The graphics on *GGS* are fine, with a couple of cute sisters and plenty of camp nasties, whilst the sound has a nice hummable tune and a few jolly sound effects too.

There has to be a gripe somewhere in the Ed's review surely? Well there is, and it's justified. The only thing that lets *GGS* down is its joystick control which can be sluggish and a tad unresponsive just when you don't want it to be. Using a good quality stick helps, because unlike the Nintendo version hitting the fire button isn't what makes you jump.

Despite the fiddly joystick problem we can't keep away from this one. In fact it means we won't have to go up to big fat sister C&VG to play Mario on their Nintendo anymore. Hurrah! But don't tell Nintendo that . . .

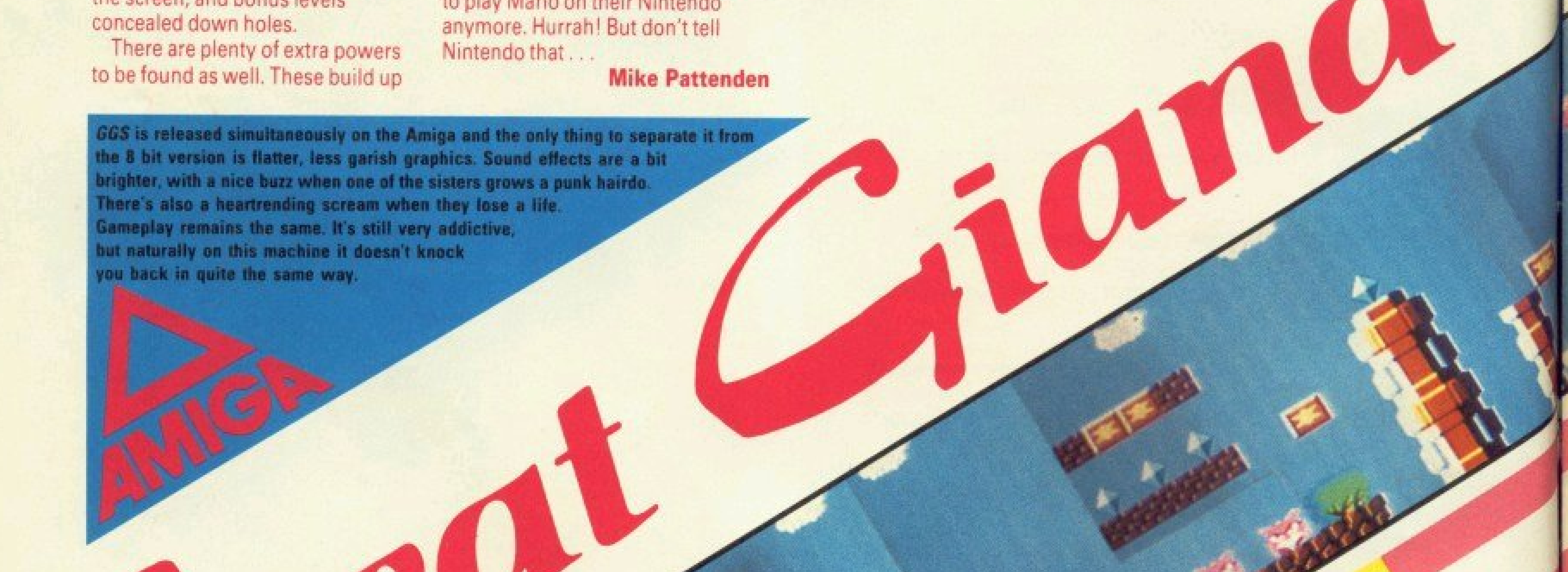
Mike Pattenden



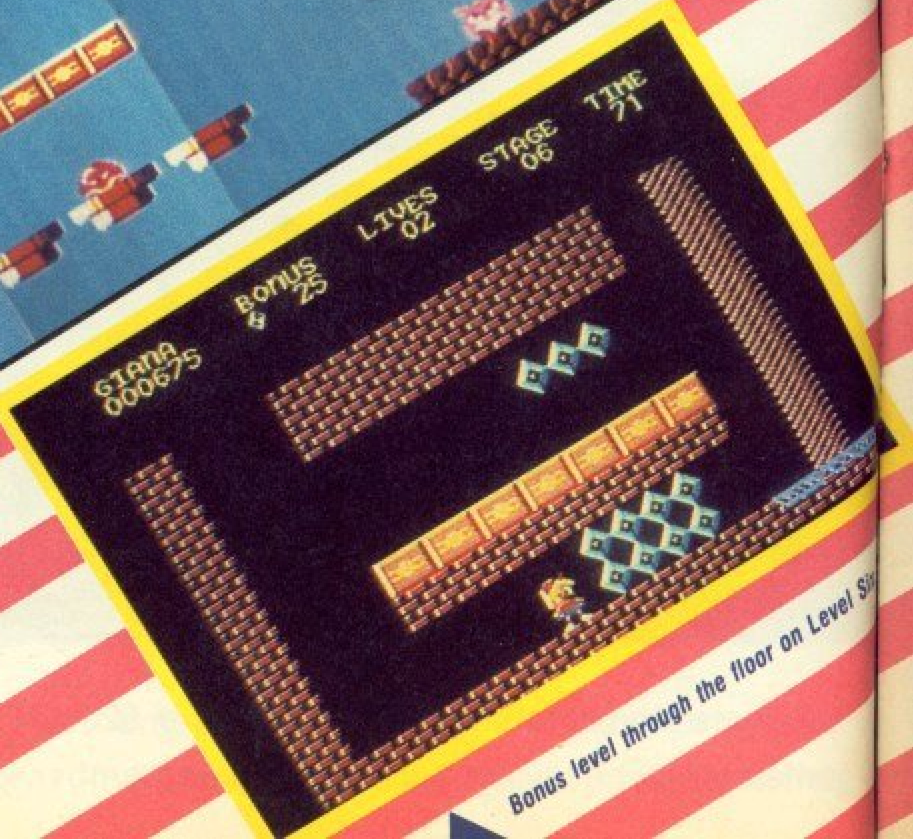
Run under the dragon . . .

AMIGA

***GGS* is released simultaneously on the Amiga and the only thing to separate it from the 8 bit version is flatter, less garish graphics. Sound effects are a bit brighter, with a nice buzz when one of the sisters grows a punk hairdo. There's also a heartrending scream when they lose a life. Gameplay remains the same. It's still very addictive, but naturally on this machine it doesn't knock you back in quite the same way.**



Level Three with warp block shown. Just a little tipette to get you going . . .



Bonus level through the floor on Level Si

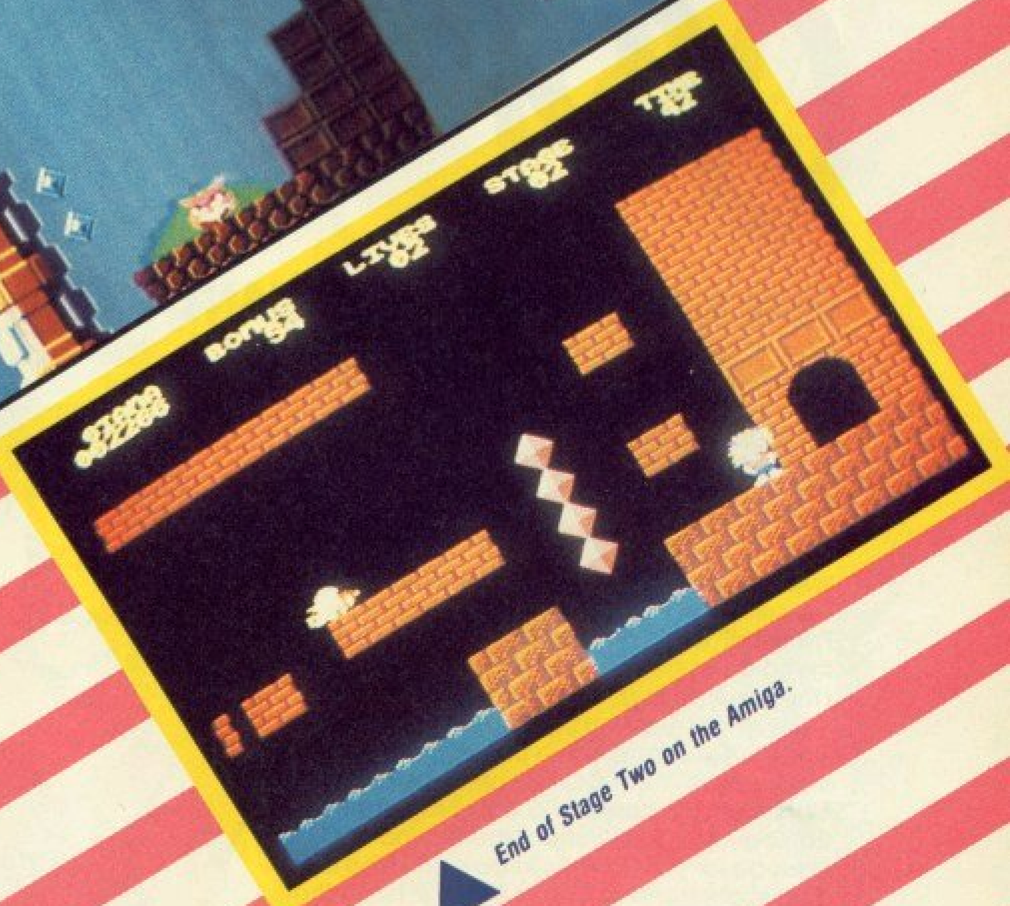
Sisters



Aaargh! Get out of that one Giana . . .



Diamonds are a girl's best friend.



End of Stage Two on the Amiga.





C.U. Screen Star

GIANA SISTERS — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- Video
- Audio
- Toughness
- Endurance
- VFM

CU RATING

8

C.U. Screen Star

el Six.

GIRLS ON TOP COMPO



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What's this? A chance to spend a dirty week in Dusseldorf. A romp in the Rhine? Frolics in Frankfurt? Well not exactly, but what you and a friend do when you get there is your business. (*These compos go from bad to wurst — Ed*).

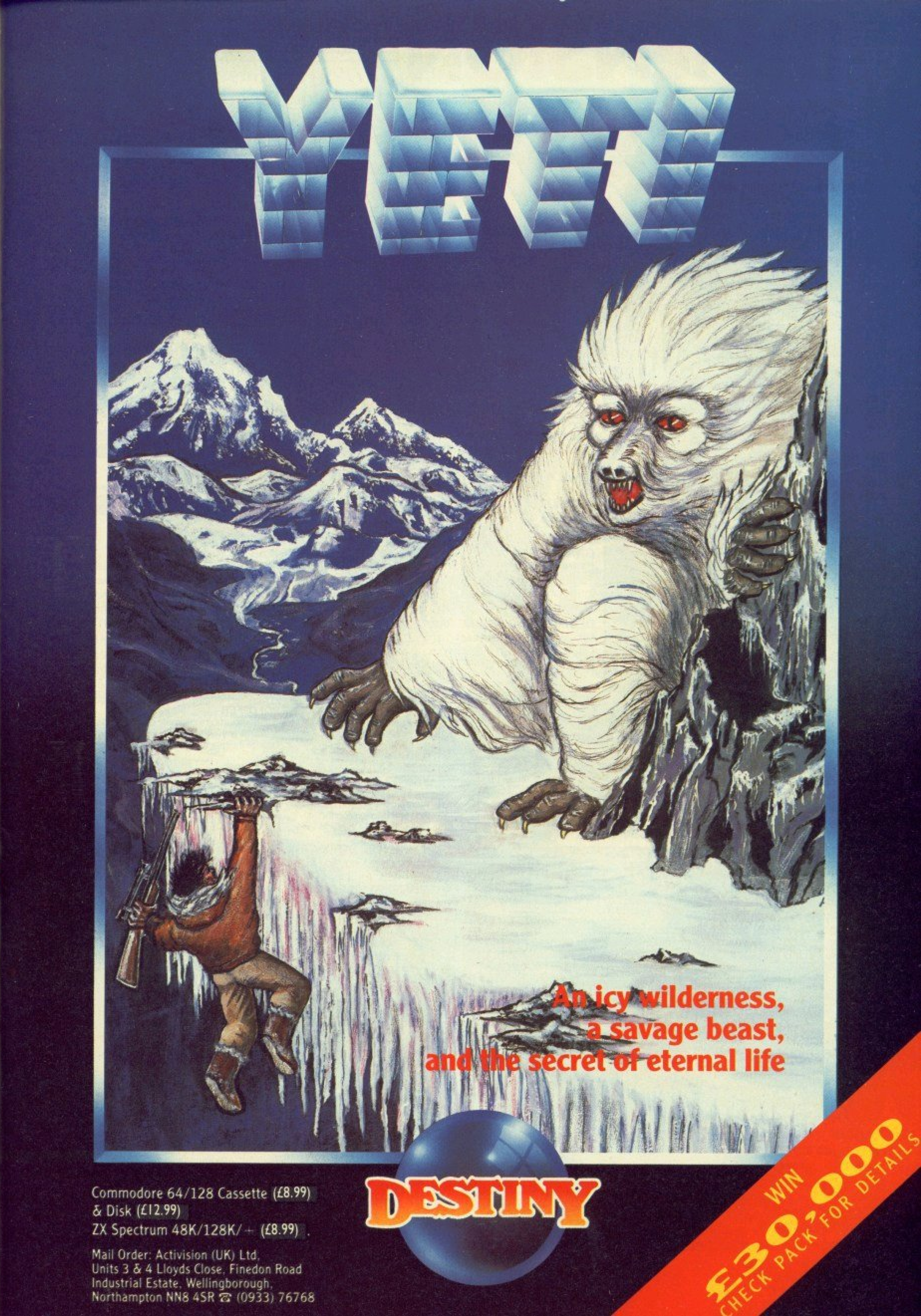
We're offering you the chance to spend a week in Germany, with a parent or friend. While you're there GO! will arrange for you to Gutersloh, the home of *Giana* programmers Rainbow Arts. They'll show you around and arrange for your names to go on the top of the high score table of *Giana Sisters II*! How's that for oneupmanship?

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All we want you to do is answer these four willy tuff questions:

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2) Which singin' soulsters sang 'Sisters are doin' it for themselves'?
3) One writes trash novels the other stars in trashy soaps. Who are they?
4) CU has two sister magazines, what are they?

Now answer the tiebreaker: "I vant to be on top of *Giana Sisters II* (Hi-score) because ...." (no more than 25 words) and send it on a postcard to SISTER COMPO, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Entries must reach us by June 18.



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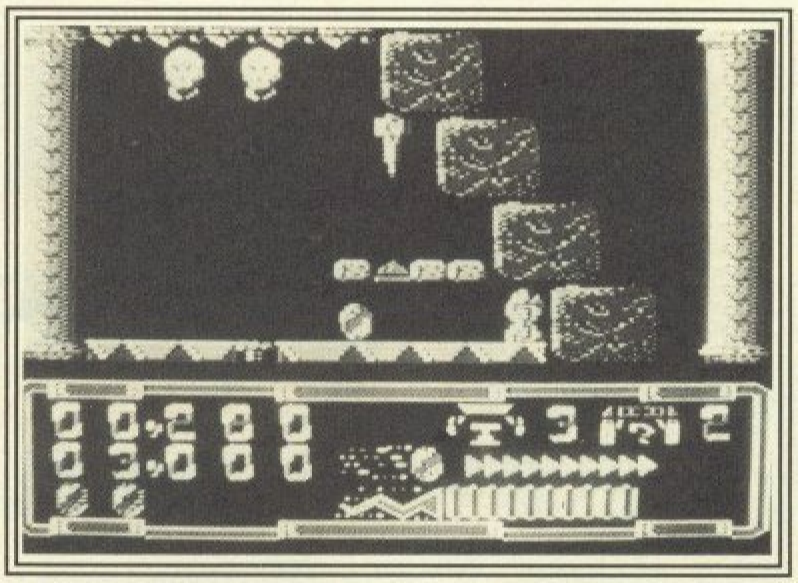
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Roll into the speed changer.

POWER PYRAMIDS

Power Pyramids is nothing to do with ancient Egypt, mummies, tombs, curses or three-week cruises up the Nile. Nothing could be further from the truth, so you can put away that pith helmet right now. No, this is a much more esoteric offering, a sort of combination of platforms, pin ball, bagatelle and one of those crappy little games you get in Christmas crackers where you have to get four tiny ball bearings into four holes.

Why *Power Pyramids* then? Well, because the thing is composed of screens laid out in a pyramid structure. There are four 'models' which you must complete to finish the game; the basic model has 14 screens and the top-of-the-range Royal has 54. It goes without saying that the Royal is about ten times harder than the Basic.

What you must do is control this little ball, except you don't control it very much at all really. What you actually do is control the environment around it. You see the ball just keeps on rolling in whatever direction it happens to be going at whatever speed it happens to be travelling. There are really only two things you can do to change this state of affairs. You can press the firebutton, which will cause the ball to take a little hop — hopefully over whatever happens to be in its path, or you can push the joystick up and one of several pretty crazy things will happen.

Pretty crazy thing number one is that pistons will come shooting out of the floor and propel the ball into the air — if it's in the right place at the right time. The other crazy stuff depends on what happens to be on the screen at the time, but generally it will be a case of diverting the ball's path. The angled slides for example can slope 45 degrees in either direction or lie completely flat.

You can vary the speed of the ball when it enters a 'speed changer' which looks a bit like one of those things the ball comes out of in ten-pin bowling. Once in a speed changer, the ball will stay there for one and a half seconds, which gives you just enough time to alter its speed from a slow crawl to superfast sprint — completely uncontrollable of course. Speeding things up isn't simply a question of getting your kicks by doing things faster, you need the speed to surmount some of the obstacles.

What's the point of all this? To turn on all the power points of course. When you turn on the power points all the gizmos get going; the swords in the floor go up and down, floors open and close, sparks fly and so do you if you're not careful. There are a number of things to watch out for, some good – like the accelerators, permeable floors, energy boosters and transporters, some bad — water, daggers, electricity, and some I'm not so sure about.

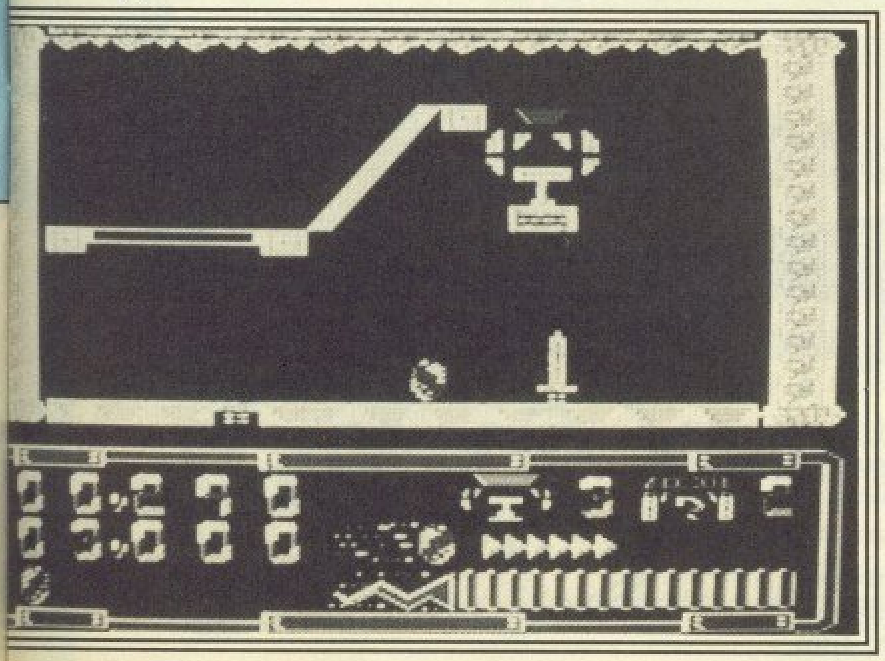
So it's a platform game with a difference. More for your thinking, cerebral sort of games player really. I could tell this from fact that the only way I could get anywhere was to hit the pause key every five seconds to work things out. Hair brained loony types who go in for a lot of killing will probably find it a bit tame.

Ken McMahon

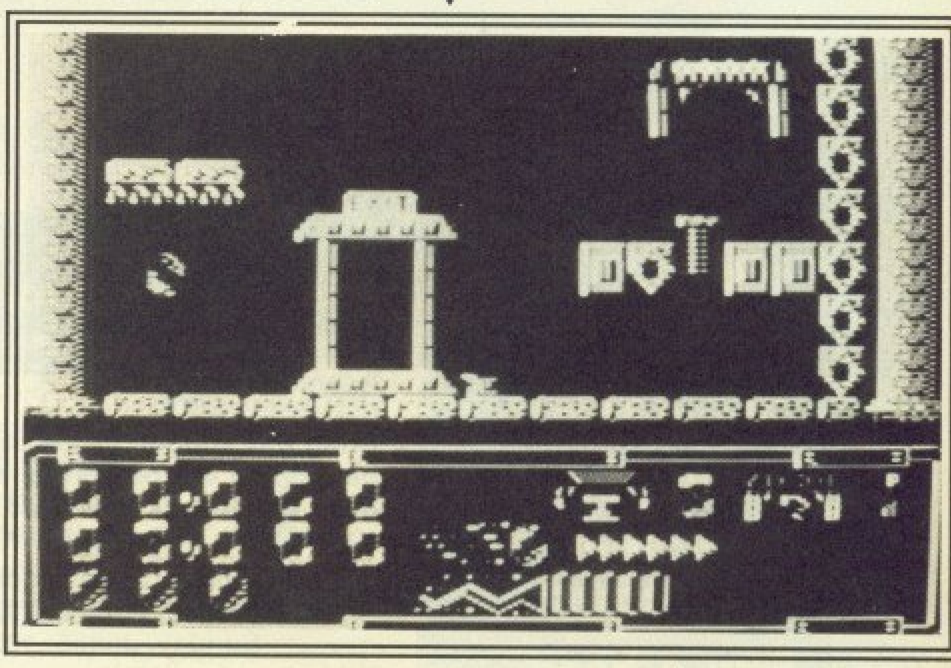
POWER PYRAMIDS — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Video						■				
Audio							■			
Toughness								■		
Endurance							■			
VFM						■				

CU RATING: 7

Avoid the sword's point.



Bounce onto the exit pad.




42
CarGalan '86

Dream Warrior

64/128
US Gold
Price: £9.99/cass
£11.99/disk

Dreams have intrigued people for thousands of years, with artists, musicians and psychologists interpreting them in their own particular way. Everybody does it, so why not base a game around them?

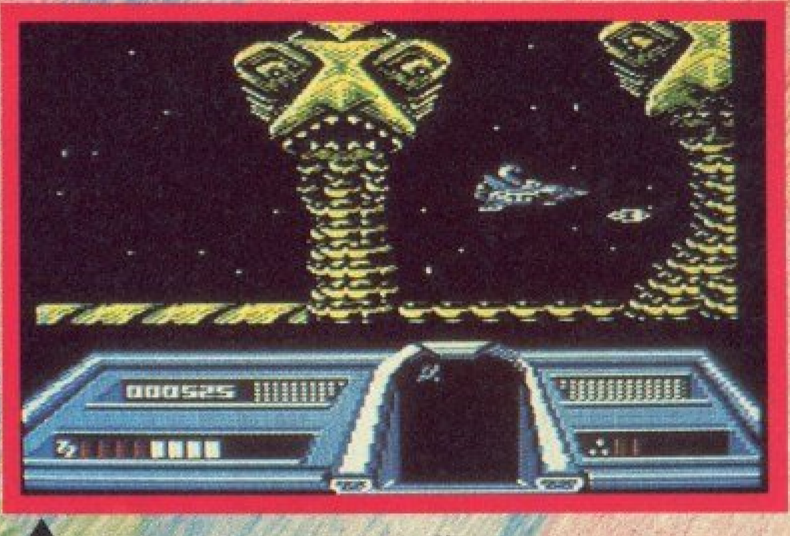
Despite the title, the only thing US Gold's *Dream Warrior* has got to do with dreams is the Dreamscape-esque scenario. Set in the far future where man has discarded physical



Doing battle with a Dream Demon.



The drab interior of Megabuck Inc.



Avoid the Wyrms and hop in the Sloop . . .

violence and now uses his mind to fight dream wars, the Earth is controlled by a huge corporation known as the Focus Fellowship, a bunch of nasty sods capable of plonking demons in people's dreams in order to dispose of them. Luckily, four members of a resistance group sussed out how to combat these Dream Demons. But they didn't bank on Ocular, the biggest, meanest, greenest and six-eyedest of all the demons. Now three of the resistance scientists are in its clutches, it's up to you as the fourth member to destroy Ocular and free them from their torment, saving the world from a fate worse than Paul Daniels in the process.

All well and good, but the game turns out to be nothing more than a rather hackneyed scrolling shoot 'em up with very little to actually do and even less to see. I'm glad I don't have dreams as dull as this, it's enough to put you to sleep for good.

The fun starts with your character appearing in the bland office-block surroundings of Megabuck Inc. He's very well drawn, I must say, and moves convincingly, which is more than can be said for the aliens you shoot or avoid. It strikes me as strange that in a game which supposedly takes place in dreams, a majority of the inhabitants don't look remotely nightmarish and wouldn't look out of place in the space-like setting of a decent shoot 'em up. That said, the Dream Demons (shot for bonus points) which appear occasionally are rather more suitable, it's a pity they don't appear that often.

The aliens come in four different flavours and all leave a small globe when shot. Picking up the green globes before they disappear gives you energy to allow you to jump from one dream to another by means of transporters called Dream Hoppers. Red globes allow you to access the safes in the walls of Megabuck Inc to boost your energy and keep you asleep. If you wake up it's game over. Collecting grey globes means you can use the lifts to move between the two floors of the two levels of the Megabuck building, and lastly the blue globes build up a picture of the scientist whose dream you occupy. You need to build up pictures of all three scientists before you can take on Ocular in a duel to the death.

Dream Warrior's gameplay is pretty flimsy, and what makes matters worse there are only three small levels to negotiate. All you have to do is stand around shooting blue aliens and collect the globes, occasionally replenishing your energy, before you confront Ocular. Ho hum. Actually, with gameplay as dull as this it's fortunate that there are only three levels. It seems a shame to waste good graphics and sound on such a mediocre concept.

Gary Penn

DREAM WARRIOR — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

VIDEO
AUDIO
TOUGHNESS
ENDURANCE
VFM

CU RATING

4

PATTON VS ROMMEL

64/128
Electronic Arts
Price:
£14.95 disk

Before Second World War experts start complaining that these two never met, *Patton Vs Rommel* is set around the hypothetical question, what if the two had been at Normandy at the same time? Written by Chris Crawford the man behind *Balance of Power, Patton Vs Rommel* has to be one of the best war games I've seen this year.

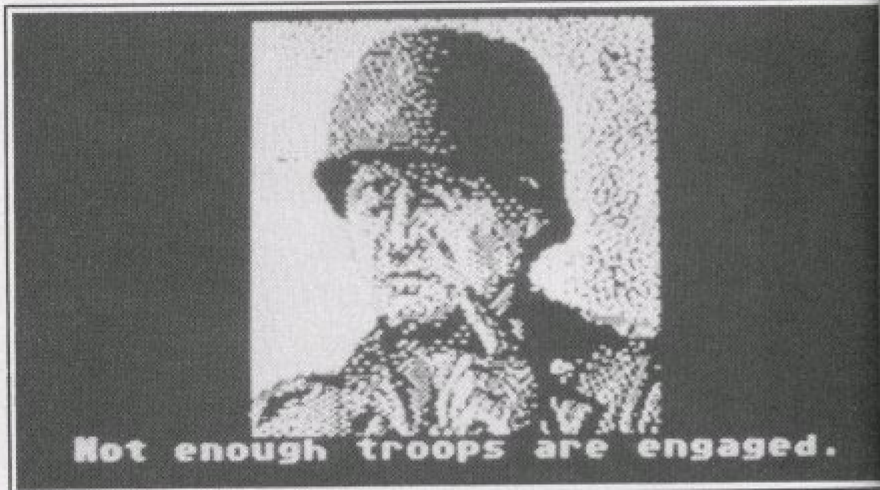
Firstly all aspects of difficulty are catered for, from the beginner's level where basic orders can be given through to advanced, where ten different types of tactical orders are available, and 30 orders can be given to any unit at once. The tactics the computer opponent uses are based on the actual strategies of Patton and Rommel and it puts up an incredibly spirited fight. But surprisingly the game is not that big, it is easy to keep track of the more significant points of the battle and the units involved. A small scale representation of the map is shown in the bottom corner of the screen and by moving an independent box inside you can control the main map quite easily.

The game uses a pointer system with a cursor, controlled by joystick, used to select the options. And there are some quite useful features.

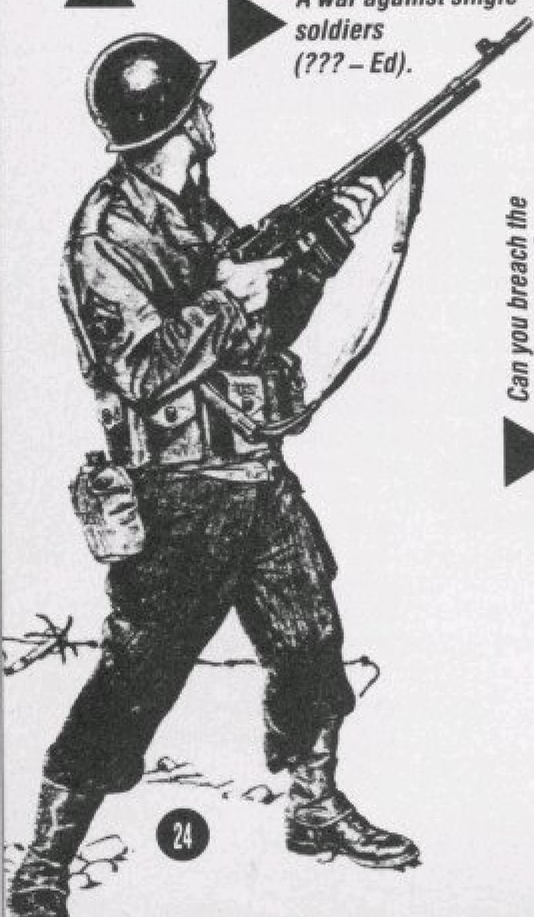
Depending on which side you're playing in between turns the faces of Rommel or Patton will appear and give you advice on how to run the battle, for the most this can be rather sketchy, but can prove handy. By selecting either the Available or Total strength icons each unit's strength is displayed, a large dot inside a unit icon will indicate a strong unit while a small dot shows a weak unit. You can also see the pressure the unit is under, the larger the crack that appears in the icon, the more pressure the unit is under.

There are only two types of unit, tank and infantry, though the allies can have air support from two divisions (by 1944 the Luftwaffe was out of action on the Western Front).

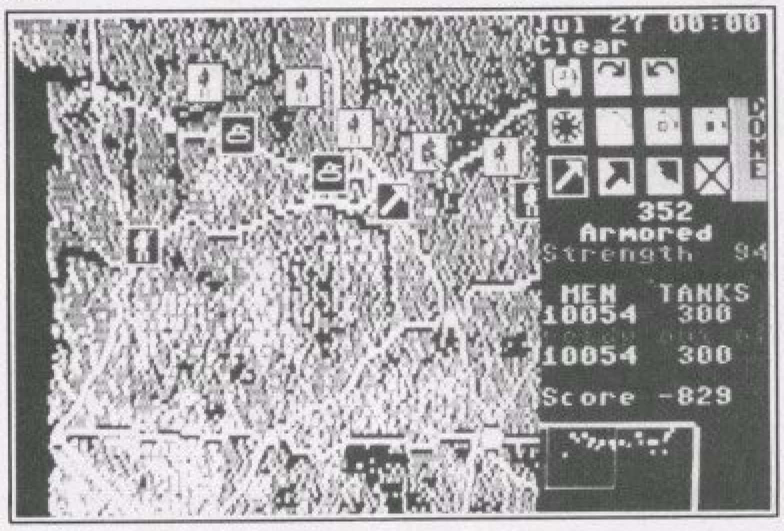




A word for of reproach from The Desert Fox.



A war against single soldiers (??? – Ed).



Can you breach the Imaginot Line?

PATTEN Vs ROMMEL — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Video
Audio
Toughness
Endurance
VFM

CU RATING

8

The map is not substantially large, so there is no danger of losing units. At the start all units are deadlocked in an almost parallel line showing the final push of the allies before the takeover.

The orders are nothing revolutionary, *wait, road mode, rotate* and the forms of attack, defense, advance and static are standard. There is a design kit on the expert level which lets you tweak all the existing units and raise dead units. If you happen to be playing Rommel you could equip him with nearly two dozen panzer units and totally wipe the floor with Patton.

I found *Patton Vs Rommel* very absorbing, and tricky. At the start it does come over as a bit slow moving but it soon becomes an all out drive to Berlin for the Allies or to the Normandy beaches with Germany. A very nice strategy game which can prove extremely taxing.

Mark Patterson



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SINBAD AND THE THR

64/128 Mirrorsoft/Cinemaware
Price: £14.99/disk



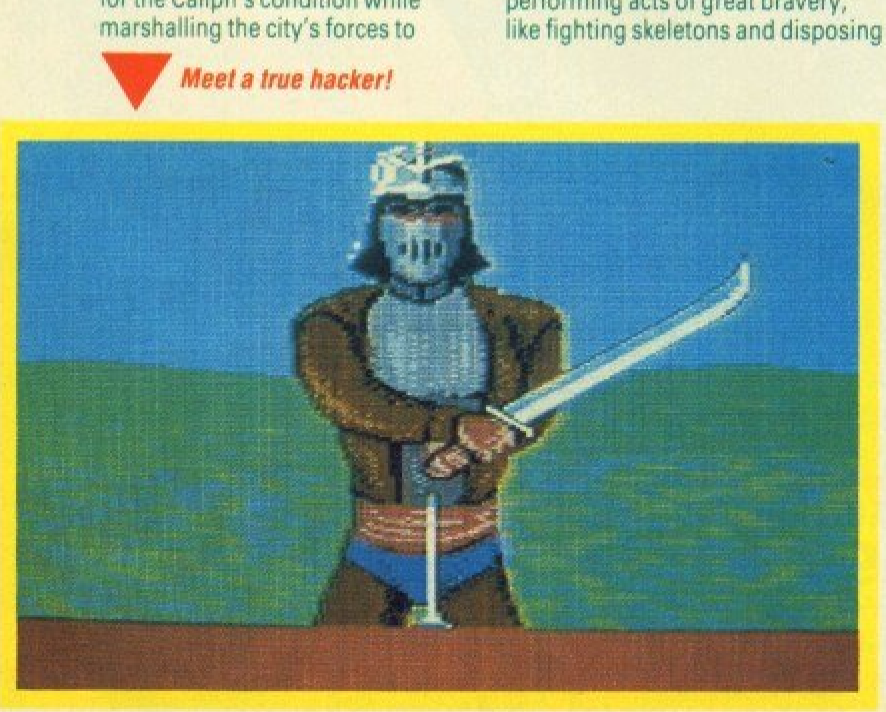
Someone your mother warned you about.

Ah, many a time I've watched the heroic exploits of Sinbad on t' telly and wished it was me sailing the high seas, peforming deeds of derring do and saving voluptuous wenches from the clutches of all things evil. Someone at Cinemaware obviously thought so too, and the result was the Amiga version of *Sinbad And The Throne Of The Falcon*, released a year ago.

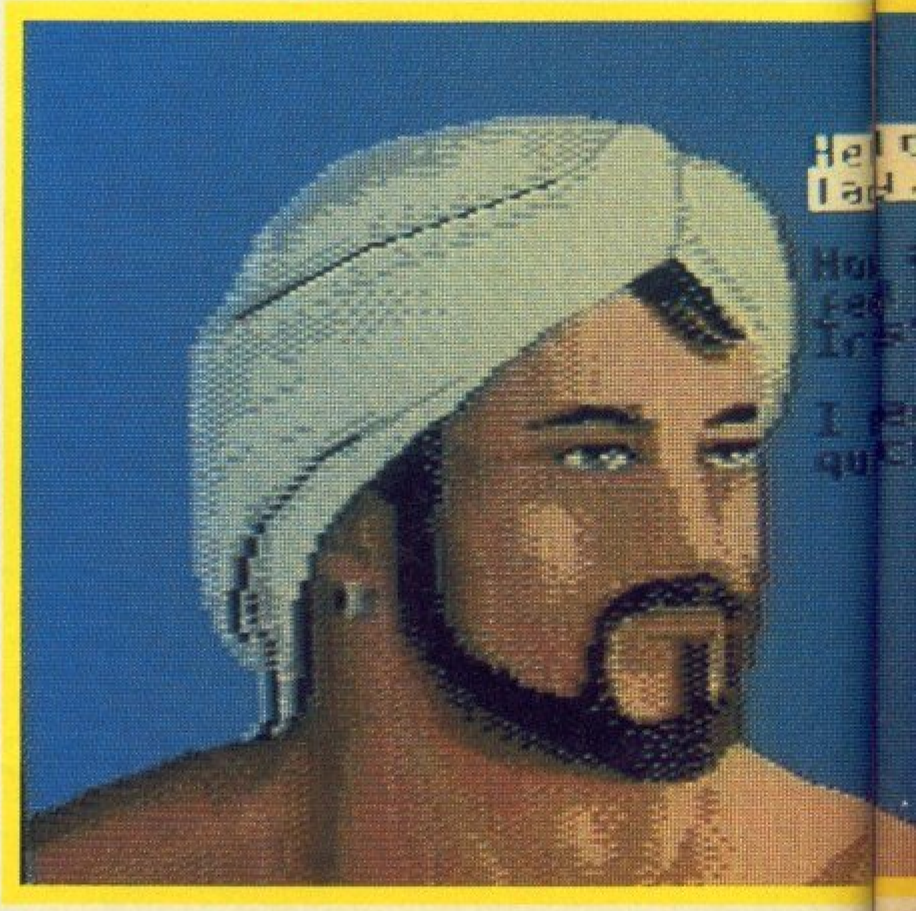
Now we have it on the 64, and it must be said that it's actually better than its previous incarnation, mainly because it's more playable, but also because it's not half as shoddy or clumsy. The plot centres around the kingdom of Damaron where the Caliph has been turned into a falcon (hence the title) by the dastardly Black Prince Camaral. Without a ruler the city is vulnerable and Camaral and his not-quite-so-evil-but-they-certainly-ain't-no-angels forces could attack at any time.

Enter Sinbad, summoned to the scene by his beloved, the overtly horny princess Syphani. With his hardened crew, Sinbad agrees to scour the world in search of a cure for the Caliph's condition while marshalling the city's forces to prevent it being usurped by the Black Prince. And, you guessed it, this is where you come in. Taking control of Sinbad's actions, you have to search the land for clues, questioning those in the know and performing acts of great bravery, like fighting skeletons and disposing

Meet a true hacker!



Snappy answers or smarmy platitudes?



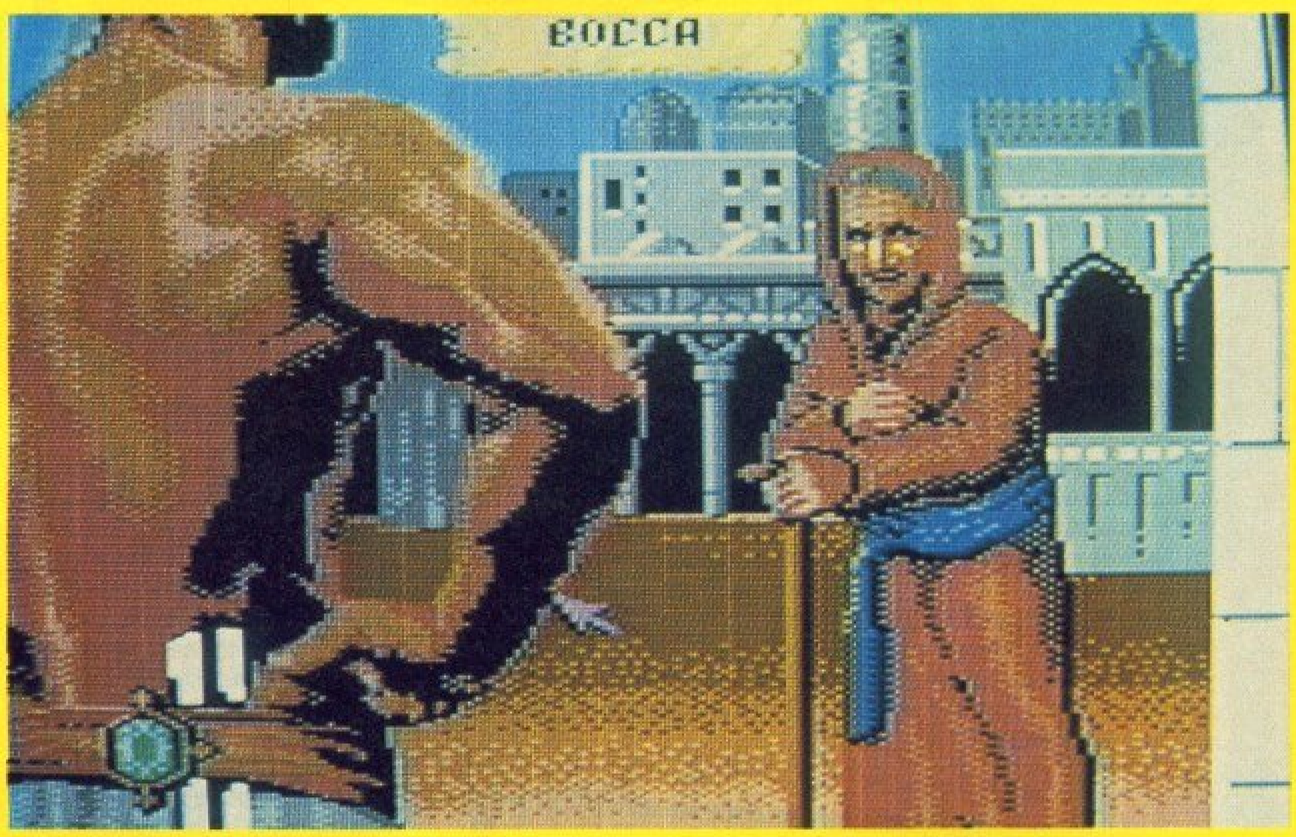
SINBAD	DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY (1–10)
Video	10
Audio	7
Toughness	7
Endurance	7
VFM	7
CU RATING	**7**



An AA map of Damaron.

RONE OF THE FALCON

Advice at the city gates.



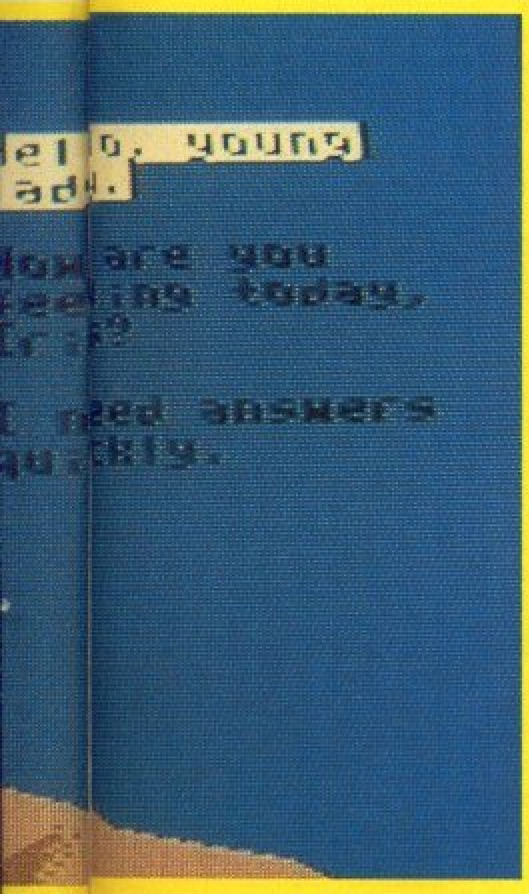
of a cyclops.

During his travels Sinbad encounters danger in a variety of guises — basically simplistic and playable arcade sequences. The ground may suddenly open up and swallow our hero, placing him in a mini platform game in which he has to negotiate two screens of platforms while avoiding falling boulders. In another instance, Sinbad is attacked by a Pteranoxos, a large flying reptilian creature which must be shot down with a crossbow. Then there's the boulder-wielding cyclops, a formidable foe who can only be put out of action with a sling-shot. Unfortunately both of these tasks lean a little towards the tedious side.

The sword fighting is presented differently from the Amiga version. Instead of two large figures battling it out *Barbarian* style, you fight the Black prince, skeletons or statues from a first person perspective viewpoint. That's to say, the opponent is shown on screen as if you were standing in front of him (it) and all that can be seen of you is your sword. While this looks quite neat the fight itself is a bit too sluggish and lacks the playability of the 'original'. Lastly, there's the shipwreck section where you have to negotiate a vertically-scrolling minefield of rocks while picking up survivors of a shipwreck. Tough, but quite enjoyable.

All these tasks are held together with occasional meetings with useful people, a bit of sailing and some simplistic strategic decisions when dealing with Damaron's forces. The graphics are first class, with plenty of detailed and colourful stills and some cute, film-like sequences of animation, for example the expression and mouth movements of Sinbad and the people he encounters. A suitable soundtrack plays throughout, changing to suit the situation and enhancing the atmosphere no end.

Sinbad And The Throne Of The Falcon isn't much of a game in the traditional sense, but as an interactive movie starring Sinbad it works well enough, and is certain to appeal to fans of *Defender Of The Crown* on the 64. It also makes up for the tepid 64 version of *The Three Stooges*. **Gary Penn**



Cinemaware/ Mirrorsoft 64/128 Price: £14.99/disk

THE THREE STOOGES

This 64 version of *The Three Stooges*, begins with one of the funniest moments ever captured on the 64: the title screen and intro music which come on are for the Mirrorsoft adventure smash *Defender Of The Crown*. But after about twenty seconds a decidedly disrespectful Stooge's digitised voice butts in: "Hey! This looks like a kid's game". Brilliant!

Unfortunately, this really is *The Three Stooges'* high point. It's not so much that it's wildly different in play or feel to last month's screen-starred Amiga version — in fact, it's almost identical to its 16-bit brother in game concept.

The problem really lies in the fact that a large dollop of *Stooge's* appeal on the Amiga was due to the look of the game. The graphics, dang near cartoon standard, wrapped up what was essentially a mish mash of different visual and game ideas in a marvellously witty package.

On the 64, sadly, much of the graphic brilliance is lost. It's not that *The Three Stooges* looks *bad*. It's just that it doesn't look good enough to hold your attention for hours on end. And, unfortunately, it doesn't play well enough to, either.

For those of you who missed last month's Amiga review, here's the scenario: those dim but well-meaning stars of the silver screen, The Three Stooges, have pledged to raise sufficient money to bail out an orphanage threatened by a heartless landlord.

You've got thirty days before the landlord kicks the widow and her orphanage out.

Each day you get a chance to try a variety of different jobs or other money-raising schemes. Your choices are represented on the top of the screen, above the Stooge's heads as they stand kicking their heels in the street. There are six choices given for each day, and at least one of these will always be a Mousetrap. There are also a selection of the following: Trivia, Question Mark, Slap Fight, Landlord, Money, Soup, Hospital, Pie and Boxing.

Moe's hand icon appears and moves between the six choices at random. You've got to try to stop it on the option you want within nine seconds or else Moe's hand will decide for itself.

If you land on Mousetrap, it snaps off one of Moe's fingers, which counts as one life lost.

If you hit Money, you have to simply sit back and wait while the happy trio saunter down the road and stumble upon a wallet or sack of cash. The only variable here is just how much dosh they're lucky enough to score.

It's the same deal if you hit Landlord: you know you're going to be hit for rent or tax, only the amount is in question.

Trivia means that you get to answer three triple-choice questions on incredibly obscure details of The Stooges careers.

With Question Mark, you may either win or lose money.

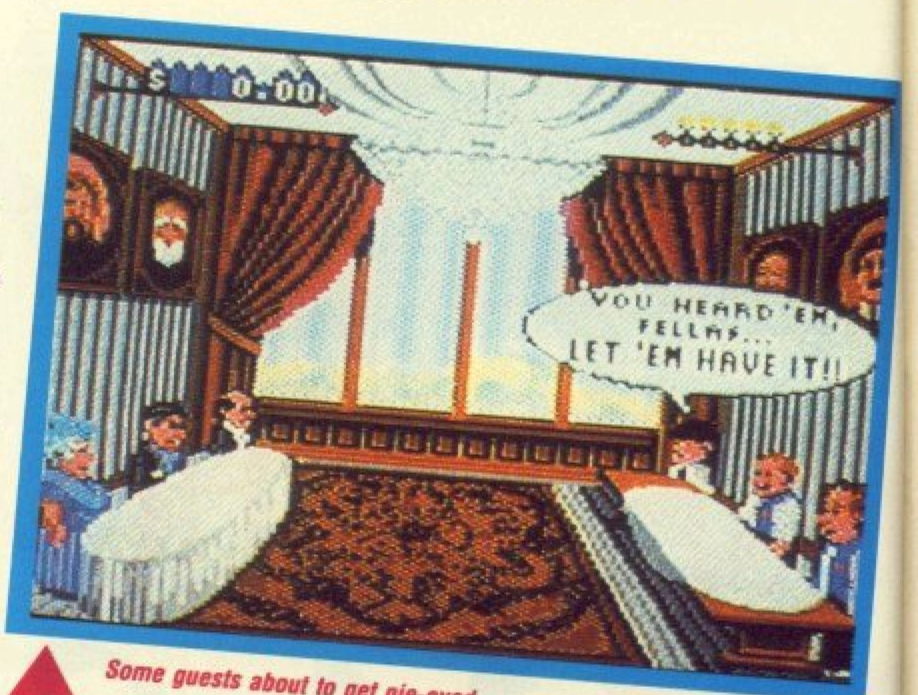
Slap-fight is a short belly-thump and ear-tweek event between the hapless trio in which you play Curly and one of your mates stands on either side of you. Above your head is a meter which represents the speed at which the hand icon moves between options in the choice phase. Each blow delivered by you reduces the speed meter level and each blow suffered increasing it. Inevitably I ended up losing out, with the meter being topped up to full speed, thereby making my choices on subsequent days even less easy to control.

All of the foregoing events are only intermittently interactive — most of the work is done by the computer, with you watching on. The four events which do involve a bit more participation are all accompanied by furious disk-removal-and-flipping-over activities — *very* wearing indeed.

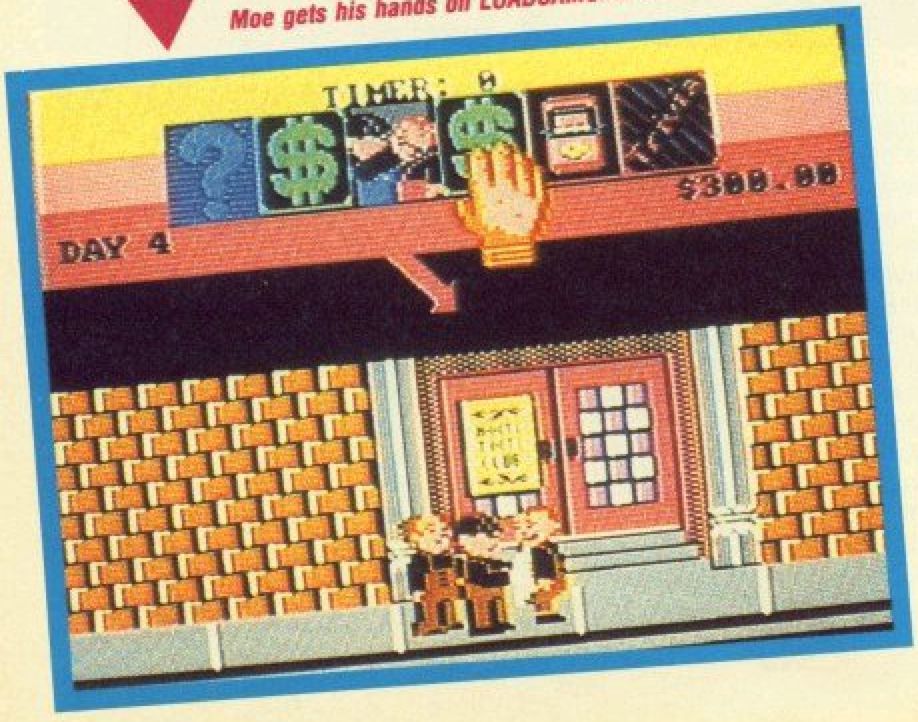
The best of these, for my money is the Soup cracker eating competition, in which you have to use your spoon to scoop crackers out of your soup before lurking oysters can. Not far behind is the *Paperboy*-esque Boxing, in which you guide Larry weaving along a crowded pavement as he tries to acquire a new violin.

The Hospital scene, in which you guide a trolly-train through a crowded emergency ward corridor, mowing down all in your path which was a laugh on the Amiga, just seems boring on the 64 without the brilliant graphics. And, as for the Pie Fight I found it impossible to control where the Stooges threw the pies.

All sounds slightly bitty, doesn't it? Well, in the cold light of day, so was the Amiga version, I suppose, but somehow its cartoon-standard graphics seemed to hold it all together. On the 64, the combination of frequent loading delays, insubstantial gameplay and (relatively) low-res graphics strips away the charm to reveal a disappointing bundle of not-quite-there ideas. **Nick Kelly**



Some guests about to get pie-eyed.



Moe gets his hands on LOADSAMONEY.

THREE STOOGES — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	5
Audio	7
Toughness	7
Endurance	4
VFM	5

CU RATING 5

64/128
TV Games
Price:
£7.99/cass
£10.99/disk

EVERY SECOND COUNTS

You may like this, or you may not, as household TV personality and all round slime bag Paul Daniels would put it. *I* do not.

Every Second Counts is the latest in a series of very average games based on television quiz shows. It's based on the programme that replaced Bob's Full House in the Saturday night pre pub slot. Naturally, it's brain numbing, particularly so in the untalented hands of Moron the magician, Mr P Daniels.

The game isn't exactly complicated. Couples compete against each other by answering fairly basic general knowledge questions to see who goes through to a big money/prize final. It's just like any other quiz game in that respect. Every Second Counts' particular trait is to trade not points (even though we all know points make prizes) but seconds. Thus the more time you gain, the more you have when it comes to the final round.

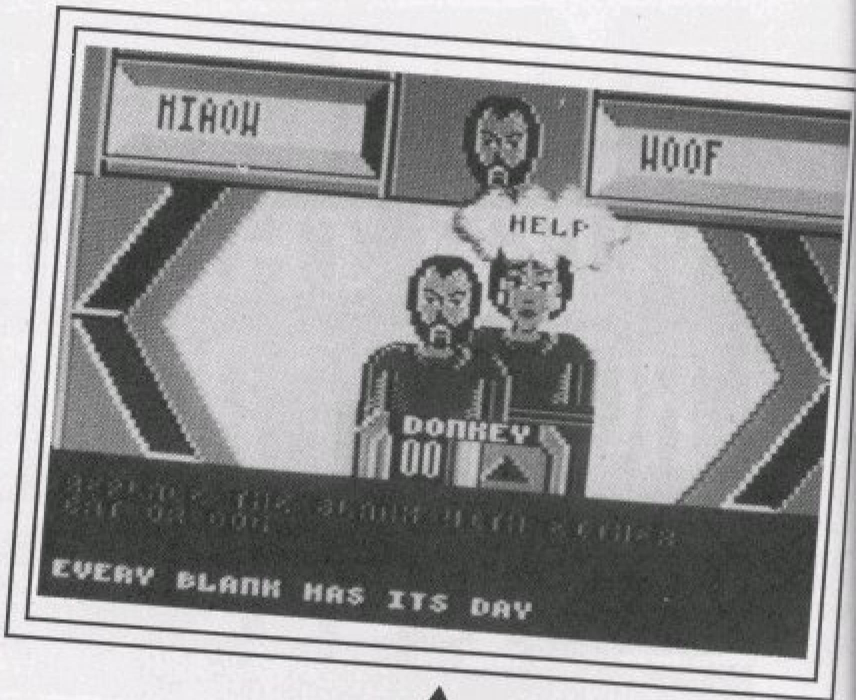
So how have the ever inventive chaps at TV Games gone about capturing the thrills of this one? A quick look at the packaging is enough to give the game away. Turning over the sickly picture of Slaphead Daniels on the front reveals three screenshots that betray this as being not dissimilar to any other quiz game. Choose from among several pictures of men and women, give them names and answer questions appropriately.

Round One is simply a question of hitting a predefined key to attest that a statement is either true or false. Answering ten questions takes you into Round Two where you can choose a category of question. You have a choice of three. Before you know where you are you're into Showcase Showdown or whatever they call the final.

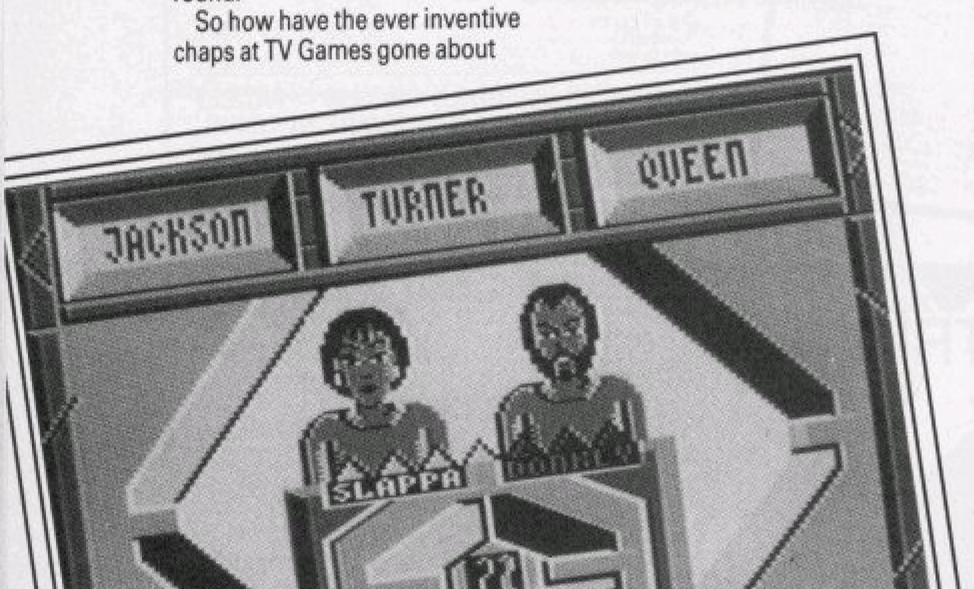
This is the high point of the game. The screen changes (gasp!) for only the second time in the game to reveal the partners in a new position in this karma sutra of quizzes: Side by side! Questions are answered alternately (lots of fiddling with various keys) on a chosen topic. The contestants have to light a certain number of triangles (borrowed from Blankety Blank) to go onto the next stage (and a bigger prize — well in the TV version anyway.)

Every Second Counts falls into the same category as just about every other release in this series. Quiz shows are fun to watch on television and to play in arcades/pubs. They're rarely fun to play on the computer. My suggestion for the next licence has to be *Catchphrase*.

Mike Pattenden



Will you like it?



Not a Lot!

EVERY SECOND COUNTS	DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	
Audio	
Toughness	
Endurance	
VFM	

CU RATING
1

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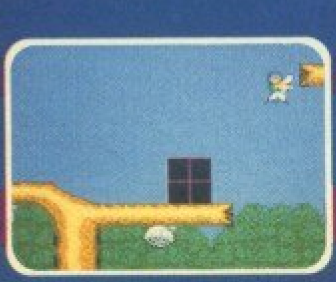


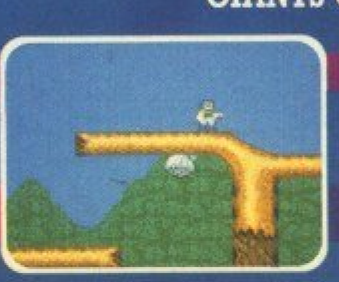
GO!

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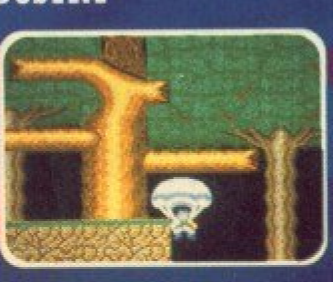




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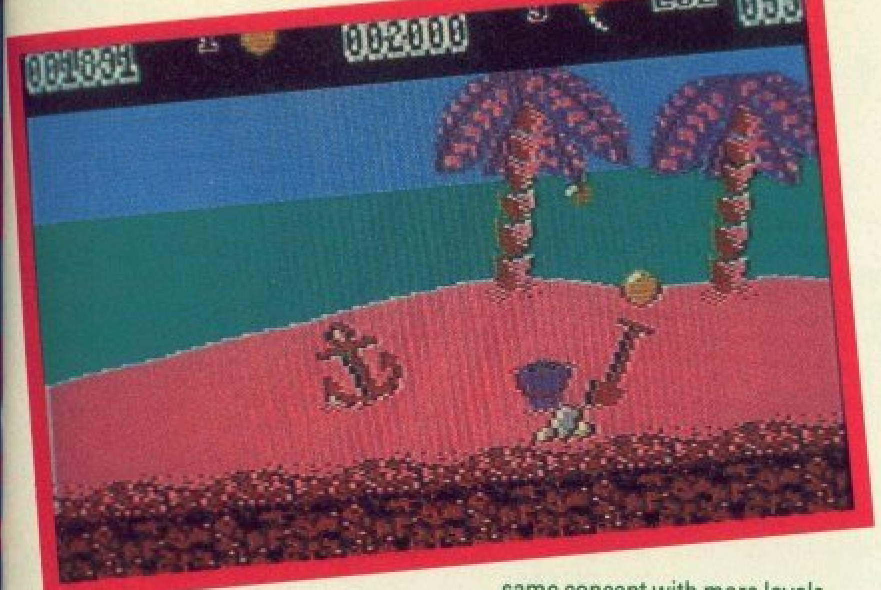
Your skill and their bionic powers are our only hope ......

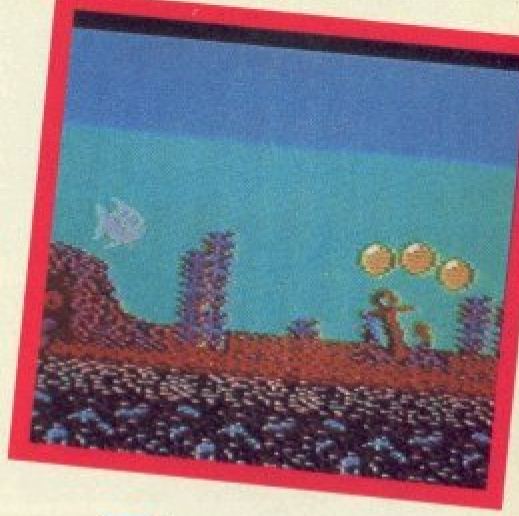




Screen shots from ATARI ST version.

GO! Media Holdings Ltd., Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 356 3388





Boing boing, bloop bloop . . .

HOPPIN' MAD

64/128
Elite
Price:
£9.99/cass
£14.99/disk

Hullllo, this looks a wee bit familiar. Four bouncing balls . . . balloons . . . cutesy *Wonderboy*-ish backdrops . . . *Hoppin' Mad* bears more than a passing similarity to a game called *Cataball,* released on Elite's *Trio* compilation last Summer. It's the same concept with more levels and . . . and that's about it, really.

For the benefit of those who missed out the first time around, you didn't miss a great deal. The idea is to guide a string of four bouncing balls along horizontally scrolling landscapes, avoiding obstacles and nasties lest they burst one or more of your balls. Collect ten balloons and you move on to the next, more difficult level.

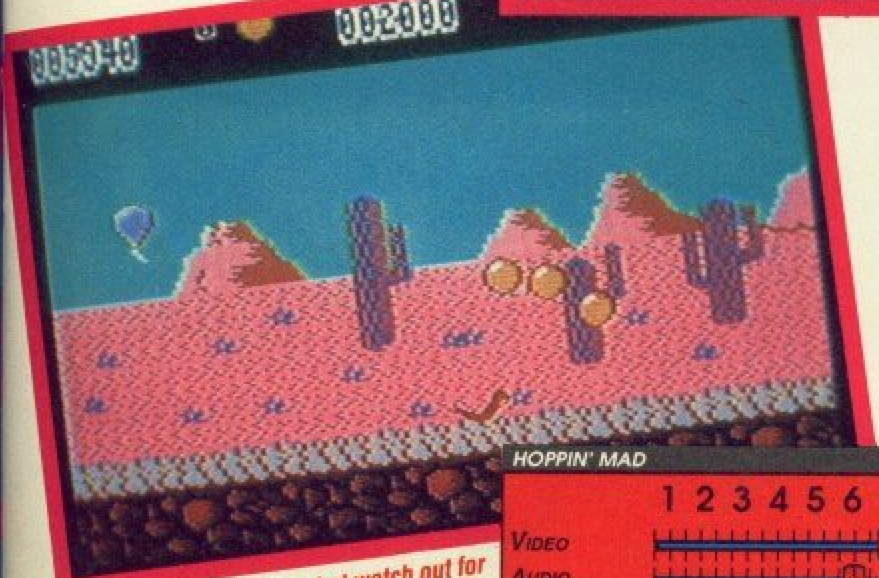
The first scene is a slice of countryside complete with fencing and trees, with birds, hedgehogs, bees, and ball-eating plants to avoid. Level Two is set against a beach backdrop, including palm trees, buckets and spades, and has you dodging tortoises and more birds.

Fish, jellyfish and rocks provide their share of problems on the undersea setting of the third level, while snakes make their debut in the ancient ruins of Level Four. Later stages feature ghosts, skulls and holes in the scenery to bounce over.

That's basically all there is to *Hoppin' Mad,* and for the price it's not really enough. It's a playable game, granted, but there's not enough variety to enthral for any great length of time. What it needs is more than just creatures to avoid and balloons to catch — some moving platforms wouldn't go amiss, in fact some more standard platform game-style features would have made things more interesting full stop. Sorry, Elite. This was almost a very good game.

Gary Penn





Ooh, a balloon — but watch out for the snake!



Level One, ho hum, not much fun.

HOPPIN' MAD — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

VIDEO
AUDIO
TOUGHNESS
ENDURANCE
VFM

CU RATING

5



▲ *A view from inside Johnny's hi-tech chopper.*

64/128
US Gold
Price: £9.99/cass
Price: £11.99/disk

INFILTRATOR II
THE NEXT DAY

Looking at this is like looking in a mirror; you know what to expect and you've seen it before. *Infiltrator II* is an almost exact copy of the original *Infiltrator*. Once again Johnny 'Jimbo Baby' McGibbits is up against the Mad Leader, and this time instead of just the one mission Jimbo has three to complete.

In the first mission Johnny has to seek out a deadly nerve gas cannister in one of the Mad Leader's bases, then find something with which to nullify it. The next mission has Johnny out trying to deactivate some missiles, and the final mission has him confronting the Mad Leader in an attempt to rid the world of his evil by implanting a small device in his brain, thus transforming him into an upstanding member of the community.

The flight section at the start of every mission is identical to that in the original *Infiltrator*, but for the sake of any one who has never seen it, here's a quick synopsis. Your craft is the Gizmo DHX-2 Attack Chopper. Start the engines and enter the heading. Before long a jet fighter performs a fly by; request identification from him so you can tell if he's a good guy or one of the others. The pilot will then ask for your ID, so here's where you play clever; if he's a good guy you respond with your code name Infiltrator, if he turns out to be bad you reply with Overlord.

When you land in the enemy base the display shows Jimbo cunningly disguised as a match-stick man. Wander over a few screens and you come across one of the buildings which make up the base. Guarding the building are some of the Mad Leader's soldiers, also cleverly disguised as match-stick men. It seems fair to point out at this stage that the map layout here is similar to that in *Infiltrator I*.

You have with you several pieces of equipment of which only a few are of any consequence to the current mission, so at all times you carry a brain scanner/implant, missile detector coolant evaporator, as well as forged papers, grenades and a mine detector.

When you enter a building the display changes with all the characters being enlarged. Most rooms are furnished with filing cabinets and other objects which can be searched.

Everybody you come across in the Mad Leader's compound is instantly suspicious of you, despite the fact you look exactly the same as them. If your papers aren't in order the safest thing to do is to give the guy a good dose of sleeping gas. This looks like Jimbo is in dire need of a dose of Andrews, but the effect is pretty much the same with the guard collapsing in a heap on the floor. When you have neutralised the gas/nullified the missiles/neutered the Mad Leader it's time to fly back to the Home Base and get the mission accomplished message.

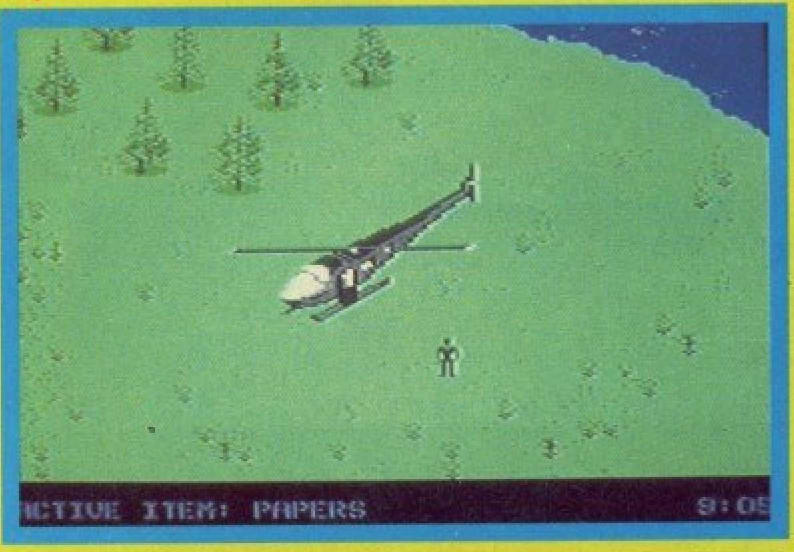
I was disappointed with *Infiltrator II*. Apart from the scenario the real changes are minor improvements to the graphics, otherwise it's basically the same game. You get a copy of *Infiltrator* with its sequel which instead of being classed as two games should really be classed as one with four scenarios. *Infiltrator* is a dated game but may still appeal to some people.

Mark Patterson

▼ *Match-stick McGibbits goes walkabout.*



▼ *Johnny McGibbits does his Johnny Fartpants impression.*



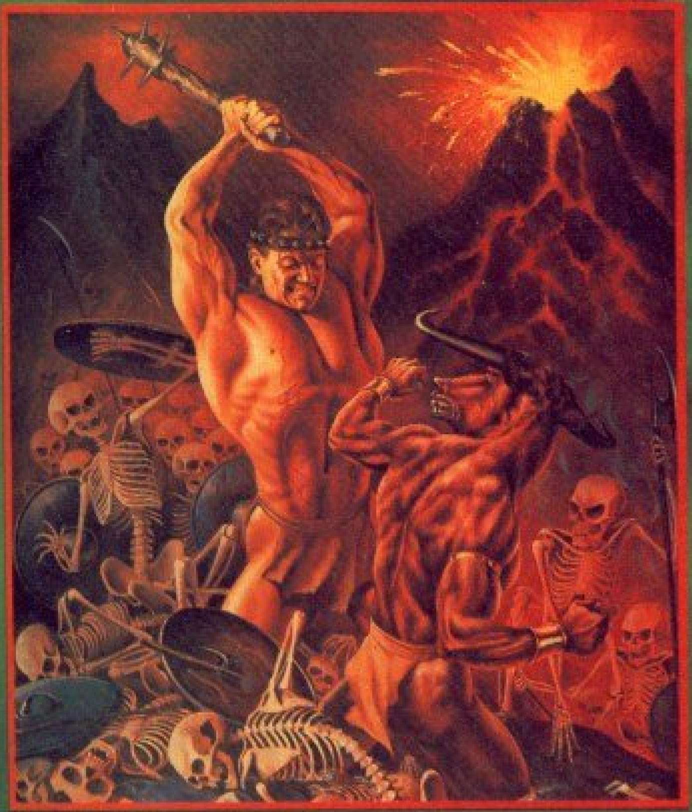
INFILTRATOR II — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
VIDEO	7
AUDIO	6
TOUGHNESS	8
ENDURANCE	7
VFM	6

CU RATING
7

Warriors of the Past...
Warriors of the Future...

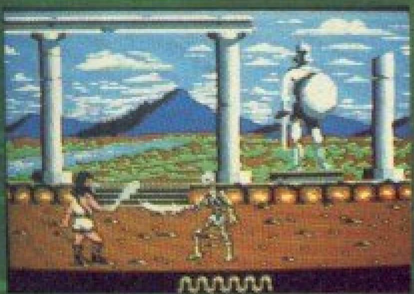
prepare for deadly combat

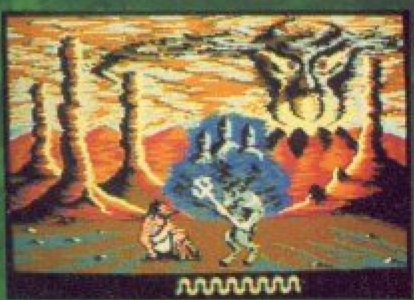


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HERCULES – SLAYER OF THE DAMNED

Son of the Gods, curse of his fellow men, Hercules is set 12 awesome tasks to exonerate the sin of murdering his children. Armed by his divine fathers he sets forth to face the hideous skeleton hordes and ultimately overcome the evil minotaur. To slay the damned is his only saviour in repenting his sins.

BLOOD BROTHERS

"Our blood is mixed,
We are as one,
Let no man or beast come between us,
And let nothing deter us from our aim,
To avenge the deaths of our parents,
And destroy the Scorpians,
DEATH TO THE SCORPIANS"

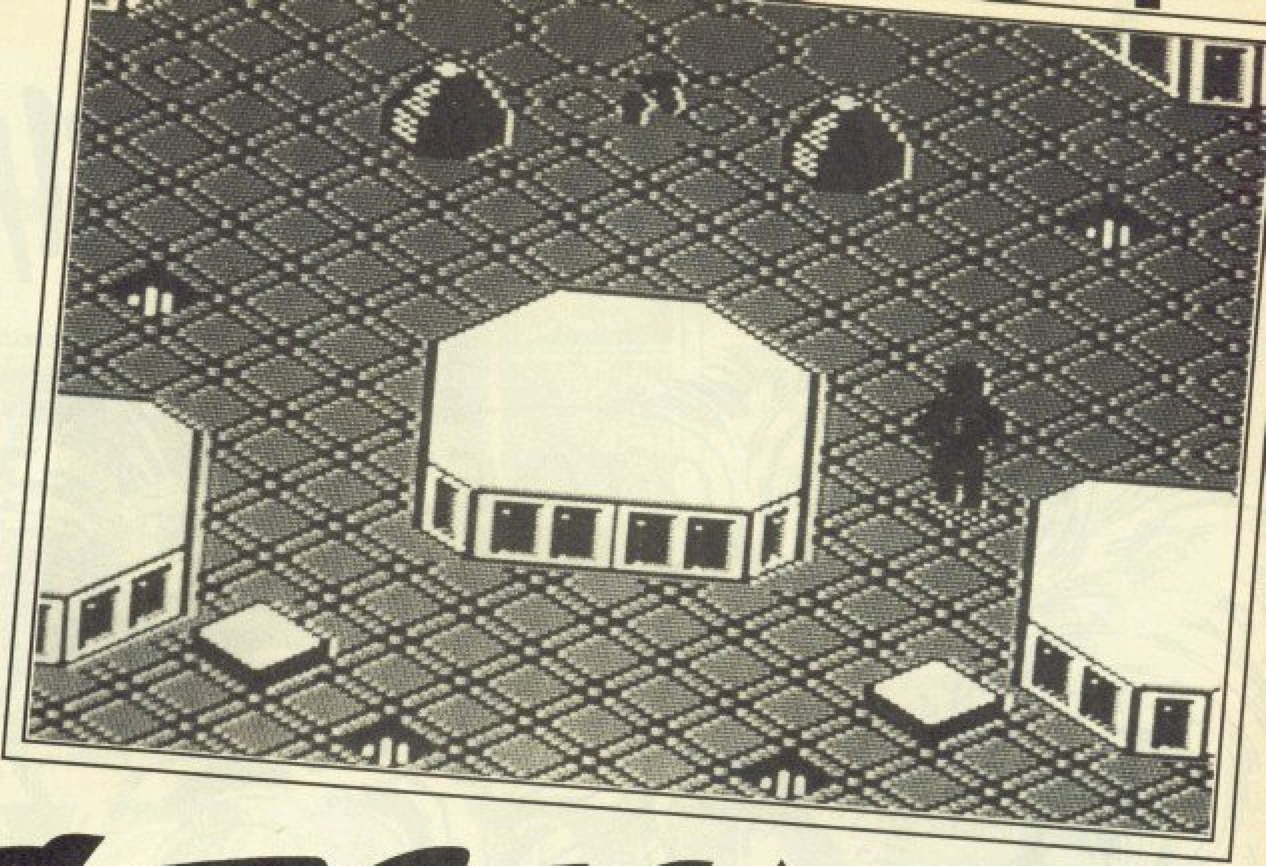




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64/128
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Lazer Tag

Lazer Tag is the computer game of the real thing — based on all those TV advertised games where you have a laser gun and a target that sticks to your jumper, whenever a direct hit is scored the target lights up or bleeps or whatever. I've never played it, but the 'real thing' looks like great fun.

By comparison the game is a yawn. You take the part of a cadet at the Lazer Tag training school and must battle your way through various tough gruelling assignments on the Lazer Tag assault course in the alloted time without falling asleep, dying from premature old age or switching channels to catch fifteen minutes of the Animals Roadshow — which is marginally more exciting.

Each stage of the course is given a name. The half dozen I managed, before the temptation to have a bath got the better of me, were called Neophite, Beamer, Armsman, Lance, Professional and Duellist, whatever significance that might have. The only worthwhile difference I could make out was that the courses change each time, whilst the action, if that's the word for it, stays much the same.

You start out at the bottom of the screen and proceed *Commando*-style to the top. You and everyone else is armed with the obligatory lazer gun and tag. You have to shoot as many of them as possible whilst making your way to the top of the screen which then scrolls to reveal yet more exciting territory to conquer. Eventually a little gate appears indicating the end of that section.

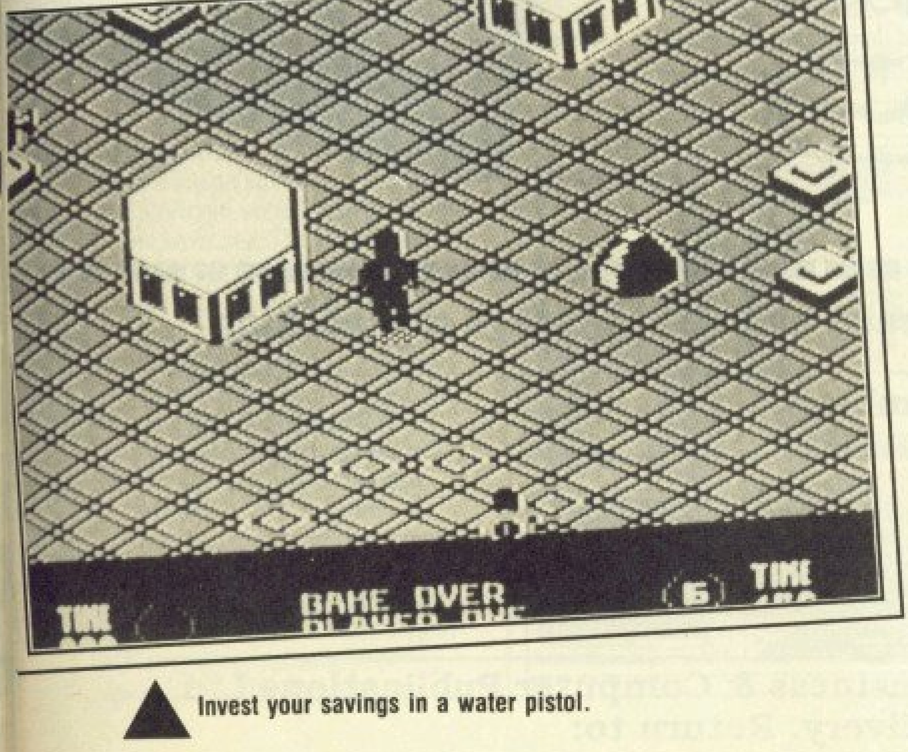
Then something weird happens. You repeat the entire section again in remote control. I broke two joysticks before I realised what was going on. The only thing you can do is fire in any direction, your little man sleepwalks the course without any help whatsoever. Unless this is some kind of attempt to show you how it should be done, whilst dishing out some bonus points for sharp shooting, I don't know what the hell is happening.

Anyway, at the end of your two rounds the score is totted up, based on how many hits you scored on the other 'Taggers' and how much time was remaining on the clock when you reached the gate.

The course itself has some interesting (?) distractions. Firing at the spinning terminals is a good idea as your laser bolts are deflected in two or four directions at once — bad news for the opposition. You can also pick up items along the way if you can distract yourself for long enough to stop running and shooting at the same time. Every now and then a helicopter or some kind of futuristic looking transporter thing hovers overhead and has a go at you. Getting hit, by the way, ain't so good, not only do you lose one of your six lives, but you get held up while you go through the motions of 'taking your shots, ie: standing around for interminable seconds with both arms in the air.

No, this is definitely not the answer. If your budget won't stretch to the real thing complete with guns, targets and 'realistic living room playing arena', I'd go for the water pistol option.

Ken McMahon

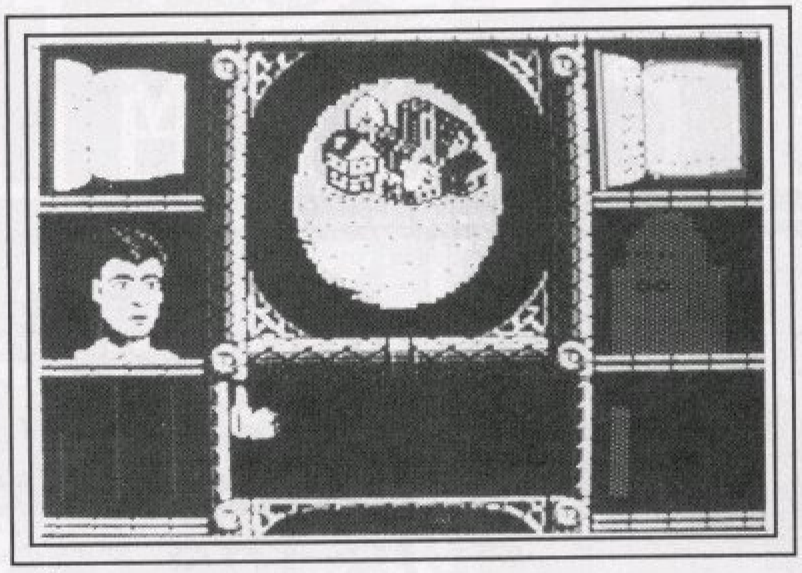


▲ Invest your savings in a water pistol.

LAZER TAG — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY	1–10
Video	6
Audio	6
Toughness	5
Endurance	3
VFM	2

CU RATING
4

64/128
GO!
Price: £9.99 cass/£11.99



Izzy whizzy lets get busy.

WIZARD WARZ

Wizard Wars, as the name suggests, is a fantasy rôle playing game, which usually means an instruction manual thicker than the phone book and more spells than any self-respecting wiz could shake a stick at. I prepared myself for a long night in front the TV — or at least in front of the instruction book.

Mercifully, the instructions only take about ten minutes to wade through and you can get started more or less straight away. This has to be one of the most straightforward games of its kind I've seen. The object is simply to kill monsters and wizards. You start as a junior wizz and battle your way up the rankings, acquiring more spells and power along the way.

The game is divided into three distinct, multi-load levels. Level One consists of seven cities, six monsters, six objects (chalice, sword, orb, crown, key, ermine), some woods, rivers, oceans, mountains and several packed lunches. Visit the city and you will be rewarded with a packed lunch to keep up your strength. Kill a monster and you will be rewarded with one of the objects. Visit the right city with the right object and you get two packed lunches. The idea of course is to kill all the monsters and return all the objects to the cities eating the odd packed lunch at appropriate intervals before progesssing the next level.

The action happens in the middle of the screen, where a bird's eye view of the land is shown through the . . . round window. The field of view expands or contracts depending on your state of health and any sight-enhancing spells you might have cast. The left of the screen holds your spells book your mugshot and your attributes — physical, mental and spiritual health. All these bits and pieces are mirrored on the right of the screen for your current opponent. A window at the bottom shows any objects you may have collected.

The first thing to do is arm yourself with a few spells. Initially there are about a dozen to choose from. Typical examples are fireball, Icy Blast, Wall of Fire, Teleport and Mirror – which reflects incoming spells back on the one who cast them. Some spells fire bolts of doom at your oponents and others, like Tower Of Will are protective shields. The spells affect only one of an opponent's attributes, so it's an idea to take along a mixture of possibles.

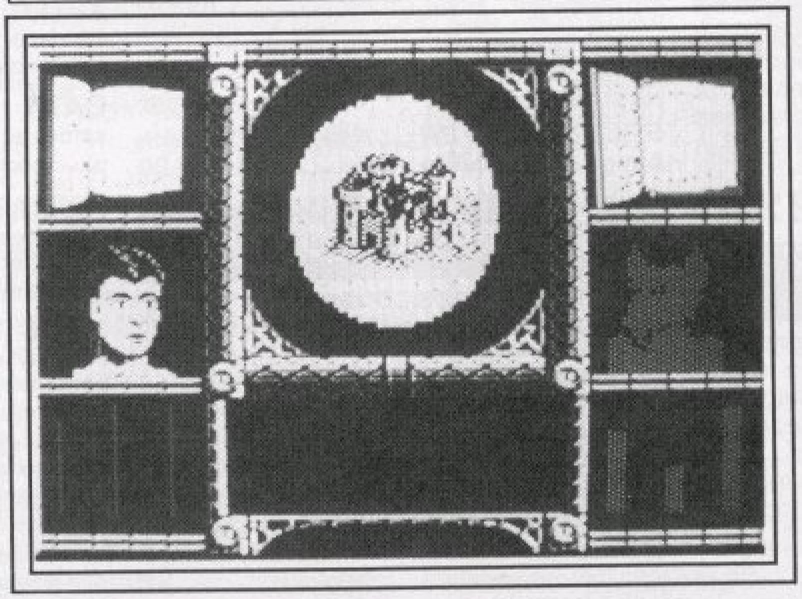
Whilst wandering around, the view scrolls in which direction you happen to be walking and it's only a matter of time before you bump into a hairy gorilla, a scorpion or God knows what. You then enter combat mode which is a simple 2D maze. Watch out, you can fall off the edges. The maze is small and you will soon encounter your opponent. From then on it's simply a question of hurling spells at each other until one or the other of you cops it. A good tactic is to surround yourself with a protective wall spell before entering combat.

If your opponent has had the same idea, you'd better hope you're carrying a spell that will break down the wall, or you'll be deadlocked.



WIZARD WARZ — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	7
Audio	5
Toughness	6
Endurance	7
VFM	6

CU RATING 7



If you manage to kill the monster, which, it has to be said, isn't all that difficult providing you have the right spells, you can collect the orb, ermine, or whatever and drag it through all the cities until you find the right one. By this time you'll probably be craving a packed lunch and, having stuffed your face, you can go in search of the next one.

Level Two is a straight fight between you and a whole horde of evil no-gooders. They each have different attributes and straights and you can take them on one at a time in any order you want. Again, when you kill one it yields either a useful object, another spell, a familiar or a complete rejuvenation of all your attitudes — handy when you're feeling a bit low.

It's the same again on Level Three — this time with wizards, or mages as they like to be called. Of course mages are a whole lot more difficult to defeat than mere monsters. They have their own familiars which protect them from certain spells and, unlike you, their spell casting does not reduce their energy so it's up to you to wear them down.

WW is a good game. The second and third levels sound a bit similar, but there's a lot more to it on the higher levels because more spells are involved and the opponents are more sophisticated. I can't see this appealing to the fanatical RPG loonies, but it would be a good introduction to the genre for anyone else.

Ken McMahon

Evesham Micros

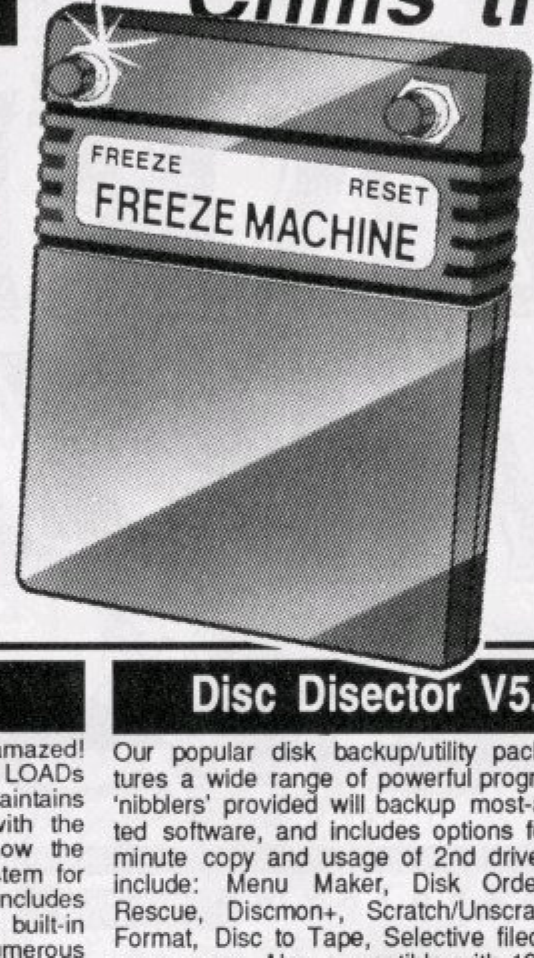
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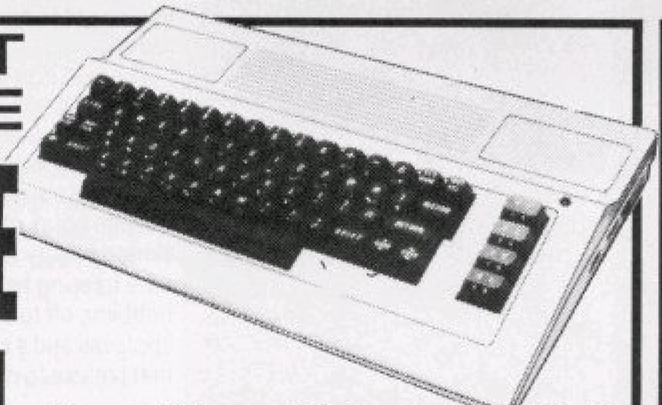
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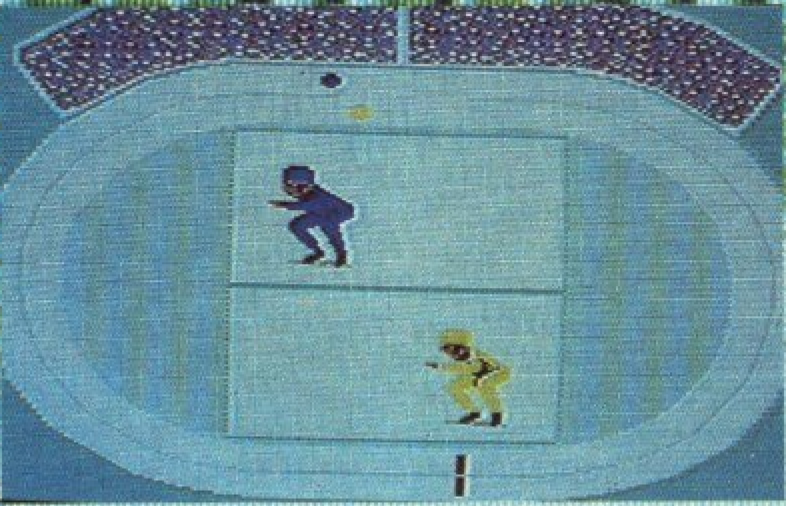
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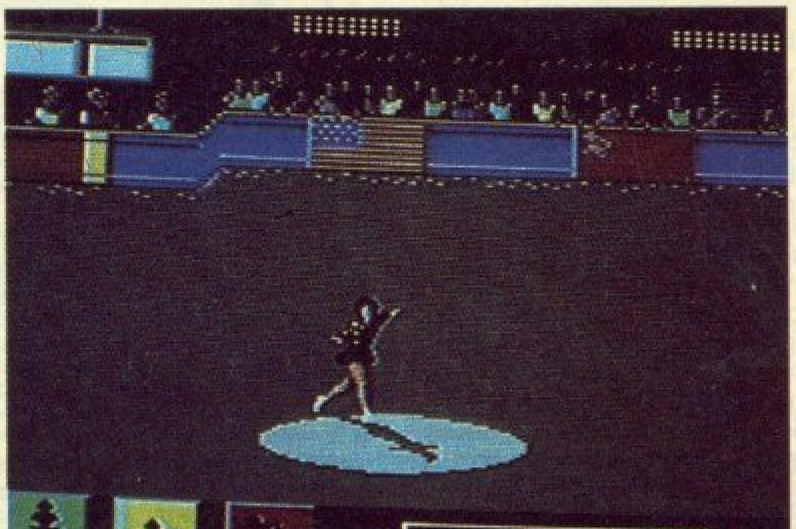
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GAMES: WINTE







With exquisite timing, US Gold have released the imaginatively titled *The Games — Winter Edition* just as we're all climbing out of our thermal underwear.

This is the latest in an apparently endless stream of epic sport sims with interchangeable titles from Epyx, the acknowledged champions in this field. It's officially licensed from the US Olympics Committee, programmed with 'input' from former US team members, and takes us back to snowy Calgary, the scene of the earlier Epyx triumph, *Winter Games*.

Though the similarities with *WG* are in evidence — indeed some of the seven events (ski jump, speed and figure skating) cover the same frozen ground — Epyx have introduced enough new elements to keep everyone happy.

The events include three absolute jewels: the beautifully animated Figure Skating, and the TV spectaculars of the Luge and the Downhill races. The first of these, the Figure Skating, tests your powers of graceful movement, artistic temperament and choreography — skills not usually boasted by us hack 'n' slash arcadesters — and consequently this event is probably more difficult than all the others snowballed into one.

First you have to select your own music from the seven tunes on offer (Bolero isn't included, thank God), and then you have to design a skating routine to go with it, including all eight of the standard hip-wrenching precision moves, such as triple axel jumps, layback spins and camel spins. And then you've got to memorise the whole routine.

The idea is to get your graceful female skater moving round the spotlit ring, doing all the impressive twiddly bits without landing on her bum. And all in time with the music. Despite hours of practice, my mini-skirted beauty spent most of her time freezing her assets, before hobbling off to a pattering of polite applause and a score so negligible that I refuse to disclose it.

Probably most hardened armchair athletes will prefer the exhilarating breakneck acceleration of the Downhill event. Described in the otherwise excellent manual as 'a free fall in white . . . A oneness with the mountain herself' (pass the vomit bag), Downhill features an unusual option which enables you to position TV cameras along the the tortuous sloping course. As you take off down the mountainside, weaving crazily between the course markers, the course is seen as if through your own frosted goggles, but each time

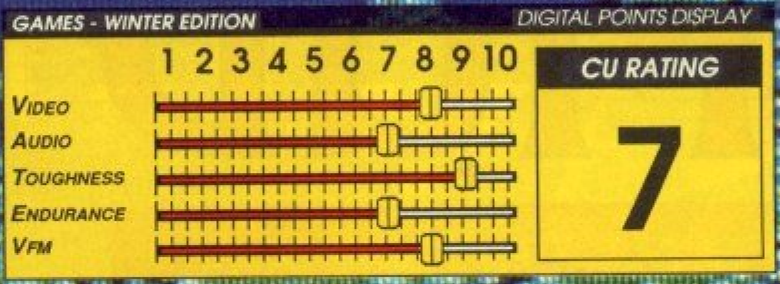
◀ *High-speed skating frolics.*

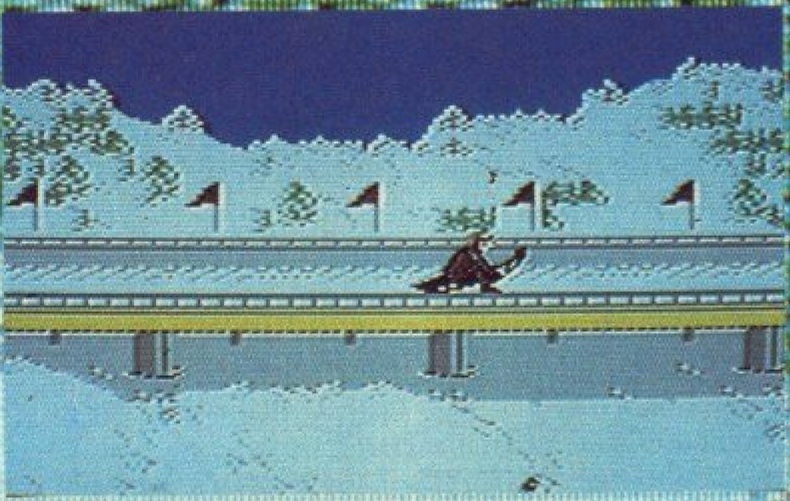
◀ *Wipe out! (Take Two).*

◀ *In the spotlight . . . Bill's chilly botty.*

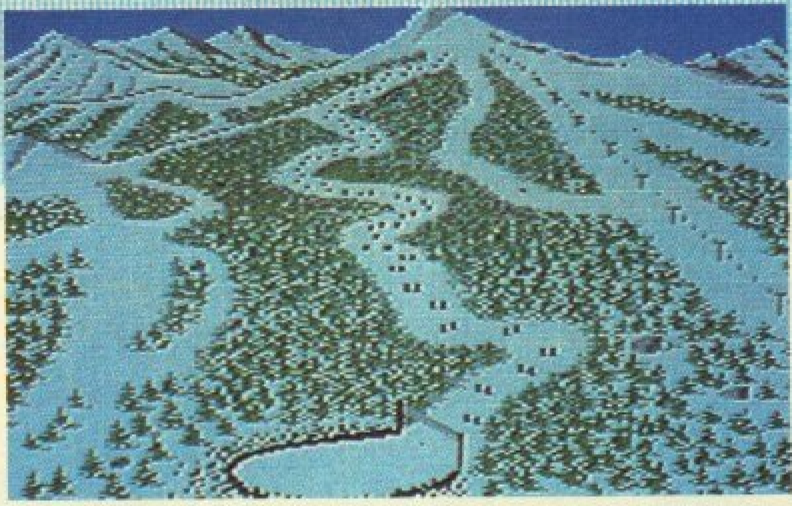
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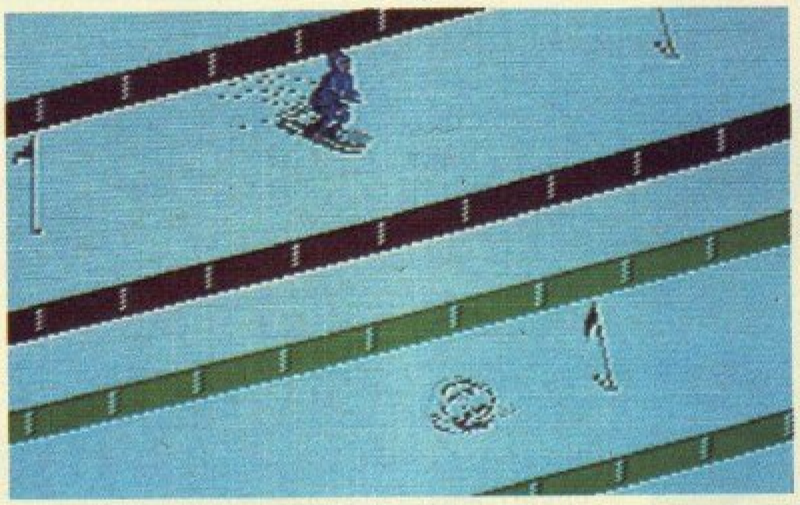




Seeing rouge on the Luge . . .



Position cameras to record your Downhill antics.



Snowballing on the Slalom.

you pass a TV camera, you get a chance to see yourself, sideways on. Real prats can even show off at this point by 'flipping'. Should you hit an obstacle, though, you also get to see yourself tumbling through the air, skidding and sliding until you arrive in a crumpled heap at the finishing line. Great for a laugh.

As anyone who watched the Games will know, the Luge isn't a bowel infection but a type of toboggan 'that's technologically designed to assault time' (!!). You lie back on it and shoot down a tube of ice at ridiculous speeds. This event displays some graphic wizardry, depicting your lightning progress through a series of camera-angle views, which show you hurtling on your tea tray from one side of the screen to the other.

The remaining four events are a bit of a mixed bag, and graphically not so hot. Both the Cross Country Ski Hike and Speed Skating involve some strenuous and rather tedious joystick waggling, though the latter requires more rhythm than muscle as you skate against a competitor around the oval track.

The ski jump is exactly what you'd expect — a suicidal leap into thin air or, if your timing is out, a humilating dive head-first into a snow-drift. It's bloody difficult, which goes someway to compensate for the graphics which aren't up to the standards of the *Winter Games* event.

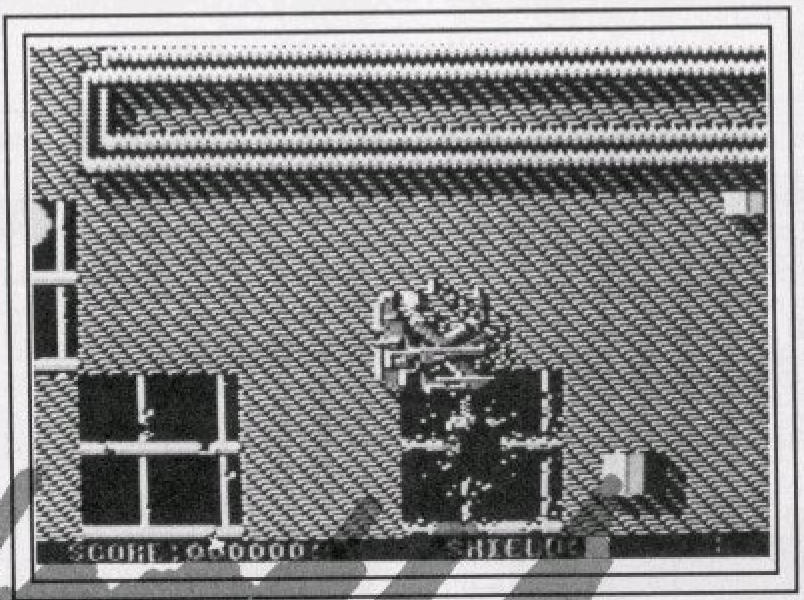
And lastly there's the Slalom, an event as old as the ZX-81, and one which could have been juiced up with a skier's view of the course. Instead we get an overhead view of the parallel tracks, as both skiers dodge back and forth between the flags. If you hit a flag you go on to complete the course as a snowball. But you don't get points for this.

The whole caboodle is wrapped up the usual Epyx trimmings — lengthy opening and closing ceremonies with mounties and fireworks, an awards sequence after each event, a World Records scoreboard, practice options, and choice of different courses where appropriate. Up to eight players can participate, choosing from 17 countries of origin, and each with its own national anthem (so if you've always wondered what the Danish anthem sounded like, here's your chance).

The frequent disk swapping doesn't hold things up too much (cassette users might not agree) but on the whole *The Games — Winter Edition* just scraped a bronze for entertainment.

Bill Scolding

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Out for a spin in the dentist's chair.

TRIGGER HAPPY

Trigger Happy is one of those zapping games that gives you minimal instructions, leaving you to work out what's going on mostly for yourself, and just to con you into thinking it's worth your while, they've stuck "featuring an amazing secret" onto the cassette inlay.

Well, it takes a real vacant-brain to be fooled by this kind ofstuff. As expected, there's not much in the way of depth to *Trigger Happy* — not until you find out the secret which, er, I haven't yet uncovered.

Anyway, the game goes something like this. You are in control of a craft that looks curiously like a dentist's chair. You fly from left to right, blasting as you go, until you reach the end of the level. Now, here's the cunning bit. When you complete one level, you start another one, only this time it's slightly more difficult. Thirty-two levels further along and you've finished the game.

The only real problem to tax the brain is the level of your shield. Bumping into things and being hit by enemy fire causes your shield to go down. That's indicated by a bar at the bottom right of the screen. With no shields left you're doomed.

The shield is self-replenishing in time, but you can get more by crashing into the occasional monolith marked with 'bonus'. Trouble is, these switch to 'greed' fairly quickly, seeing you off immediately if you hit them at the wrong time. Finishing a level automatically boosts your shield to full strength ready for the next onslaught.

Unlike most shoot 'em ups, *Trigger Happy* is really quite slow both in its scrolling and movement of the craft. It gets even slower when you're firing. Despite that, there's still plenty of room for skill because there are so many obstacles.

Most of the obstacles can be disposed of easily, revealing a kind of grid pattern underneath. Others take more shots and will fire back at you. Some move up and down and can be crashed into when they're up. The enemy installations are harmless when recessed in the ground but will fire at you, even once you've passed them, from behind once they've popped up onto the surface again.

There's also a well-defined route to take through each level, giving each one a maze-like quality. On later levels you'll meet tanks and rocket launchers.

On the whole, there's nothing really new about the scenery — it looks like loads of other games I've seen before only a bit bigger and chunkier. You expect various objects to do something when you blast them, like increase your speed or give you more spectacular firepower. They don't, they just get blasted, and your firepower remains the usual spray of dots — very disappointing.

A nice touch is that there is sound effect for each gun. So with three guns working, you hear a three-tone effect, with two you hear only two.

In its favour, *Trigger Happy*'s graphics are bigger and bolder than the usual. And the craft is much larger and fairly well defined. I suppose that's why everything moves so slowly. Despite that, there's plenty of challenging action. But with 32 similar levels to content with, the secret had better be worth the trouble.

Also in its favour are the passwords. At the beginning of the game you're invited to enter a password which will take you directly to the level for that password. This is sensible programming. Programmers who make you go back to the beginning, in my opinion, deserve to be locked up in a room with Paul Daniels.

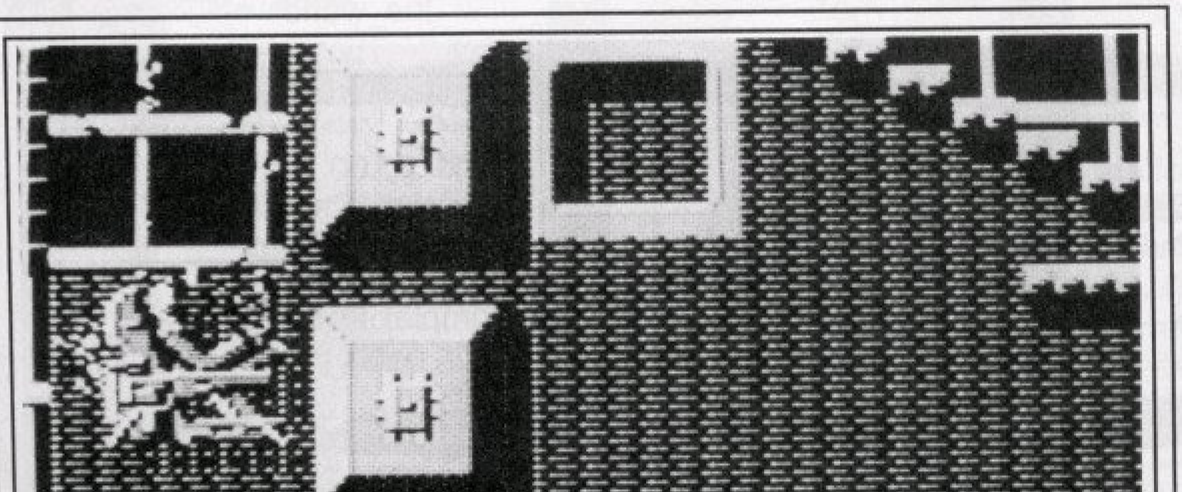
Bohdan Buciak

TRIGGER HAPPY — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	7
Audio	7
Toughness	8
Endurance	5
VFM	7

CU RATING **7**

Finish a level – if you dare.



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CHUBBY GRISTLE

Grandslam 64/128 Price: £9.99/ cass

The Ed has made a (rare) error of judgement giving me this game to review. Little does he know that 'cute' games like this make me want to stick my head in a bucket. On top of that it's a ye olde platforme game with a wacky little title tune — that's filled another bucket.

Anyway, to the story: Chubby Gristle is a pot-bellied big-nosed git sorry, character who hops and skips his way round 13 levels picking up food and other items. The object, it seems, is to get home to Mrs Gristle and create a lot of little replicas of CG. It says here that if you go into your house at the end of the levels loads of little chubby sprogs come running out — sounds revolting.

This may sound like fun for those of you who never played games like *Jet Set Willy* or the *Monty Mole* series. But to old fogies like me, this is just one big yawn.

The graphics are much the same as their predecessors: brickwork walls and platforms, ropes, ladders, moving lifts and escalators. Each level occupies one screen, with its exit taking you off the screen and into the next one. You can go back to a level you've just left. The game should be mappable since the screens seem to connect with each other in a logical order.

The hazards are also pretty standard; annoying things you bump into or other things that dash around. In this case kids on scooters and hysterical mothers rushing around for their kids are major threats, as are birds, other flying objects, revolving fans, cogs etc, which cost you one of your five lives if hit. Lose all five and, surprise, you're back to the beginning, and that annoying little tune. Give me the Eurovision Song Contest any day.

Falling also loses you a life, as does banging your head on a platform or a stalactite when you jump.

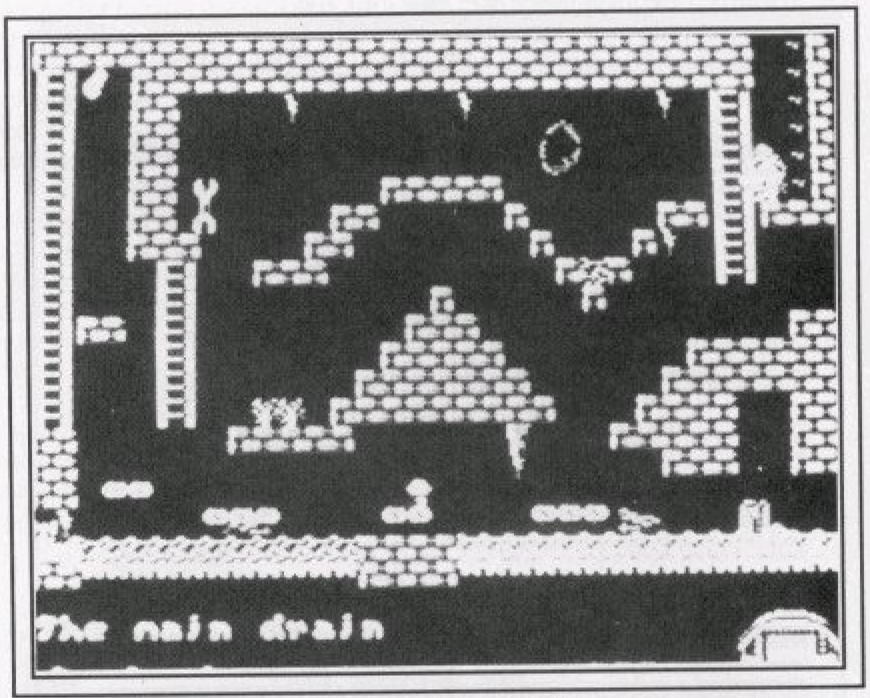
As for the objects to be picked up, the flashing ones are food. Pick these up and your weight on the Ton-o-Meter at the bottom of the screen increases. There are also non-flashing objects to be had, like shopping trolleys, money bags and various tools, which increase your points total.

Finding the exit to a level is pretty easy, but getting to it is another matter. On some levels, though, you can hop up a downward moving elevator to reach another level. One level features a crocodile-infested waterway. To get through this lot, you must pick up the well-nigh inaccessible wellies. There's pair of lava-proof boots to be had too.

Each level is identified by a sentence that appears at the bottom of the screen. You get stuff like, 'Permit holders only', 'Trespassers will be sat on', 'You can't park here' etc. This is curious, you might say. It seems that the programmers based the game on a carpark attendant working outside their offices who used the same phrases. Now we know who to blame.

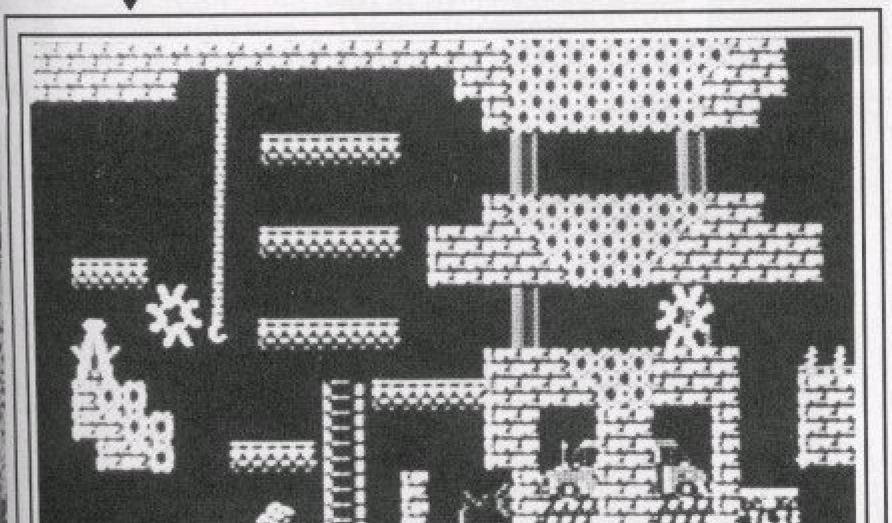
I can't say I liked this game. To its credit, it's put together very well, with reasonable graphics and good movement for the main character – but so were the dozen or so lookalikes that came before it. I just can't see the point in yet another return of the same. Groan.

Bohdan Buciak



▲ ***Monty come back — all is forgiven!***

▼ ***Could this mean the return of the platform game?***



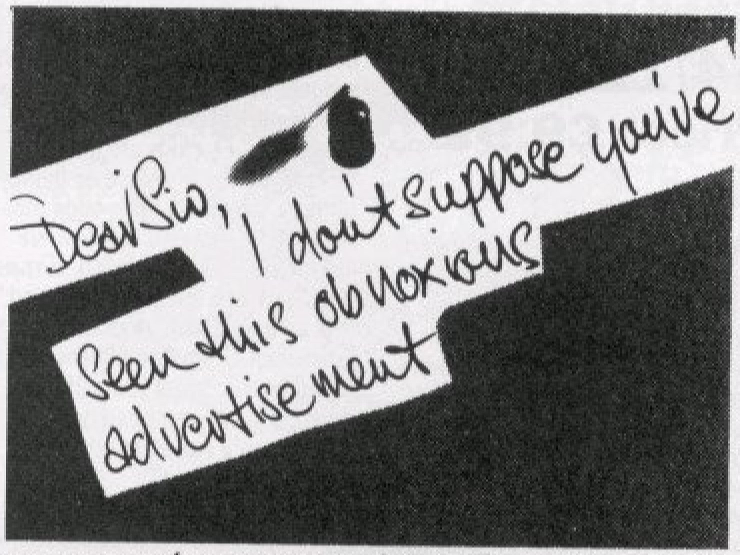
CHUBBIE GRISTLE — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
VIDEO	
AUDIO	
TOUGHNESS	
ENDURANCE	
VFM	

CU RATING: 5

AMIGA

The Amiga version of Chubby Gristle is unsurprisingly, identical to the 64, with on notable exception. It proves beyond doub what we suspected: Chubby is based o C&VG's fat, Northern slob of an Ad Manage Gary Williams. Speech on various screen is based on a jobsworth parking attendan at Grandslam and declare "You can't par here", and "'Ave a word with commission er." Sound effects include Chubby's tum an some horrendous burps. The appeal of thi may only be limited to those of you with fa Northern friends.



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Neat title sequence.

ECHELON

64/128
Access/US Gold
Price: £9.99/cass £11.99/disk

Echelon is a 3D space flight simulator set on the planet Isis. It's more than a 'take it up for a spin and land it again' type simulator. There's a planet to survey, aliens to fight and pirates to defeat.

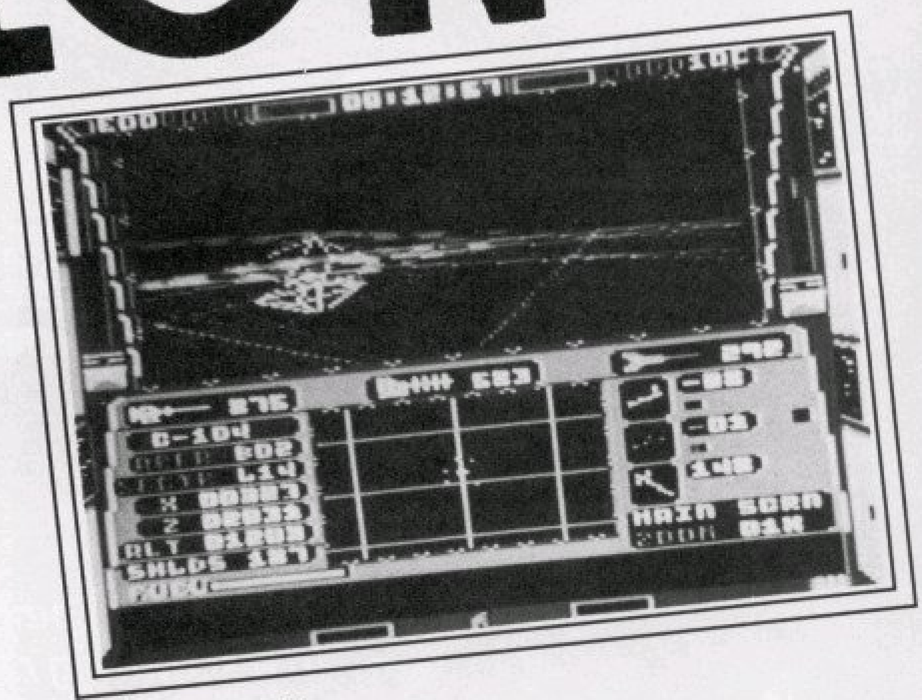
The game makes heavy use of the kind of 3D wire frame graphics to be found in games like *Elite, Cholo* and *Starglider*. But the most revolutionary thing about *Echelon* — is the Lip Stik. Don't panic, and banish from your head all thought of having to walk into Boots and ask for a tube of Max Factor rouge. The Lip Stik is in fact a radical alternative to the conventional joystick fire button. Using a headset microphone — a bit like the one that flips out of Captain Scarlet's hat — it works not by speech recognition, but by voice activation. In other words you can't give different commands, but any sound you makes activate a fire button response.

The Lip Stik doesn't unfortunately come with *Echelon*, you have to buy it separately, but you will be able to use it with other games.

Like all flight sims, it's worth keeping the manual in your lap until you get the hang of things. There are two things you must be absolutely familiar with if you are to get anywhere, the screen display and the keyboard which has a card overlay to make things easier.

Your patrol sector consists of a six by six grid further subdivided into a 14x14 zone grid. An area map can be displayed on the screen while play continues, and a zone map indicates your exact position and areas already covered.

The keyboard provides a comprehensive set of controls including seven different view options plus zoom, weapon selection, teleport, map selection and so on.



Shoot to kill . . .

Your objective is to discover the whereabouts of a pirate base, located somewhere within your patrol zone. The space pirates have developed a sophisticated cloaking system which keeps the base invisible, but there is a special sequence of six steps which, if performed in the correct order, will de-activate the device.

Each of the six steps is represented by a map which has a graphics and a text section. The maps are empty to begin with and are filled in each time an object is teleported aboard. The text with each map gives instructions on how to complete one of the six steps. The problem is the text is in pirate code, which you have to decipher. You must also work out, through the clues, the correct sequence in which the steps must be performed.

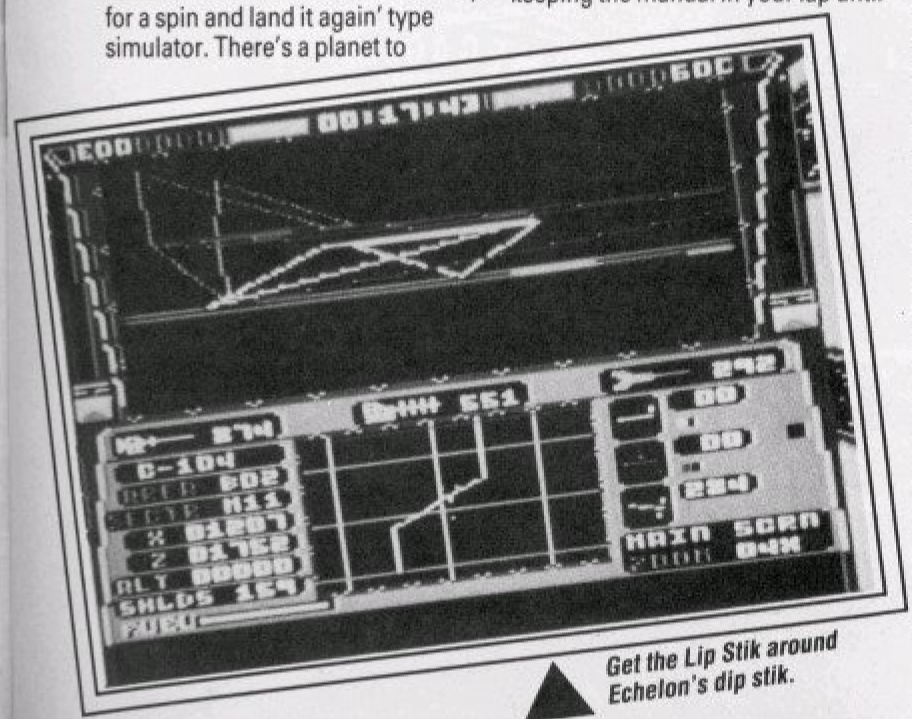
Your task is clear. You have to painstakingly search the planet surface, teleport all discovered objects aboard and use them to crack the pirate code and discover the base. A ground-based droid, or 'RPV' can be teleported to and from the planet surface to assist in the location of objects.

To help you get the hang of things there are six training courses. You are provided with a hard copy map grid on which you can pencil in the locations of features and objects. The area from A2 to C4 is already mapped for you and this is where the training courses are located.

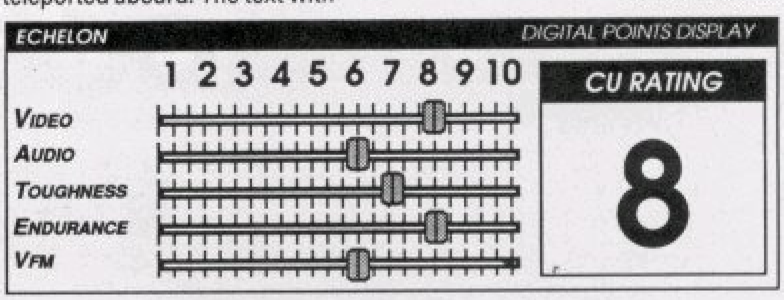
Echelon is a complicated game, make no mistake about it. The manual runs to 70 pages and here are lots of sophisticated and fun things to try.

The only criticism I would make is that, as with all 3D wire-frame games the 'action' is on the slow side. There are things you can do to speed things up, like 'switch off' the planet surface, but then you lose half the atmosphere. On the other hand, if you enjoy big games which require skill to master and time to complete then this is for you.

Ken McMahon



Get the Lip Stik around Echelon's dip stik.





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REVIEWED: RETURN TO ATLANTIS

GARRISON 2 • WIZBALL • FIREPOWER

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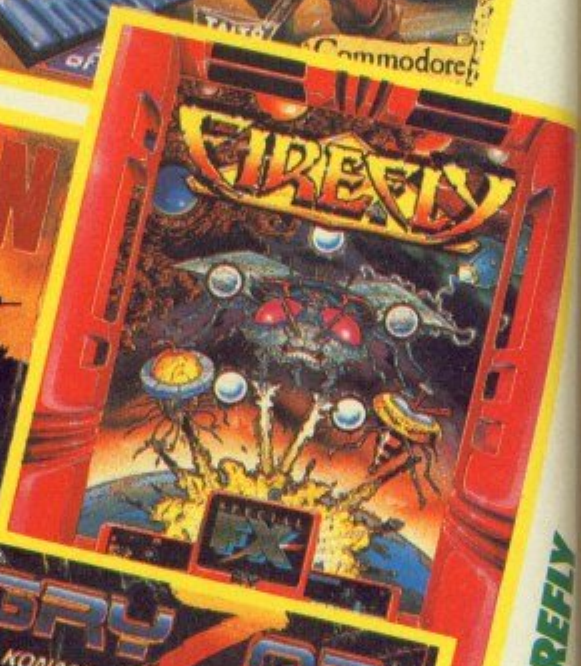
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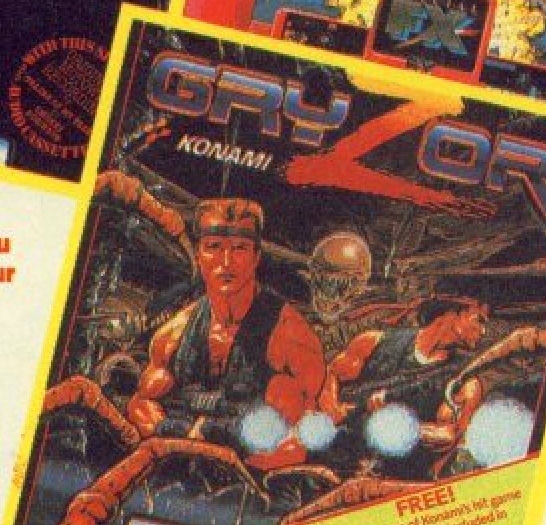


PLATOON





FIREFLY



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NEWS

TEL-ICOM

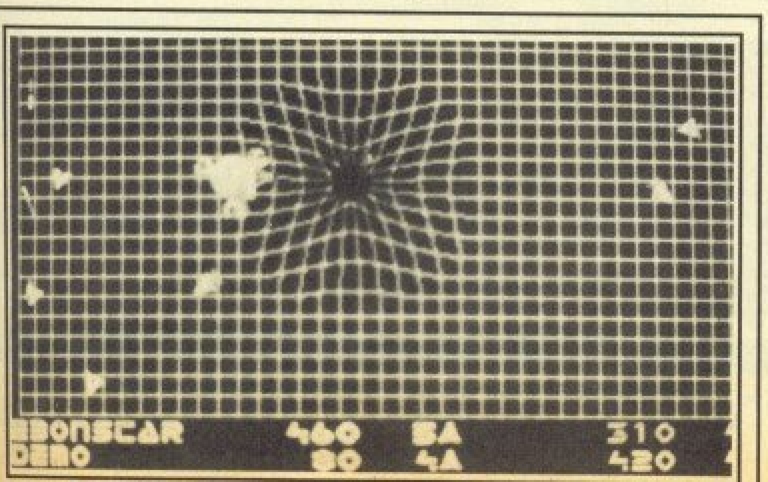
Telecomsoft have just signed a two year deal with 16-bit specialists Icom Simulations UK, whose previous portfolio includes *Dejà Vu* and *Macventure.* The fruits of this union will be three arcade-style games from the British branch of Icom, and three adventures from their American arm. The first of these products will be a shoot 'em up set in the wild west and it's also understood that the deal will include *Deja Vu II*.

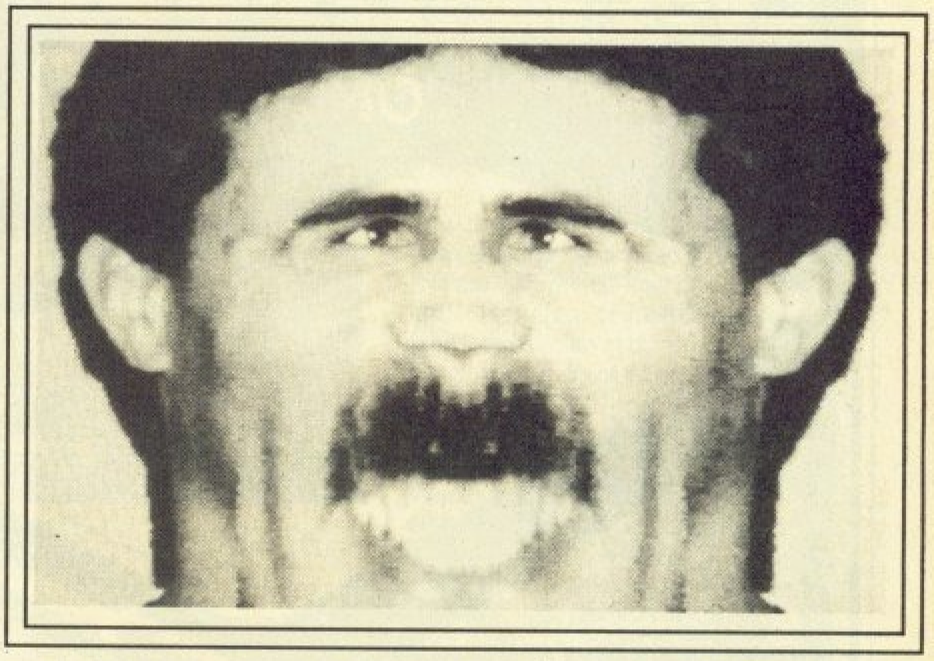
ACTIVE-ITY

Active Sales And Marketing, who already represent Novagen, Logotron, Software Publishing Associates and Exocet, have just signed a distribution deal with top French software house Lankhor, and the Amiga version of their award-winning adventure-with-speech, *Mortville Manor*, is, according to an Active spokesperson, "imminent".

WARPED

We've just come across *Ebonstar*, a game originally released in America through Microillusions and due out any day now over here, courtesy of Activision. Set in the year 3000 AD, it contemplates a time when mankind has succeeded in conquering disease, war, poverty and every other planet under the sun. So where's a race to get their bloodthirsty thrills? In the Ebonstar sector, the spaceage equivalent of a vacant lot, where brave (foolhardy?) contestants take on one another and a whole host of third party foes, each trying to push the enemy into the weird black holes that break open in the fabric of space with great frequency in this particular area. More arcade-y than most of Microillusion's efforts, we'll be interested to see how the finished product stacks up.





TRUE COLOURS AND MOVING PICTURES

Two hi-tech products just coming onto the UK market look set to confirm the trend, already reported in CU, of using the Amiga to create professional images for a fraction of the cost and expertise previously needed.



Microillusion's *Photon Paint*, which has just become available over here through Activision, boasts that its brilliant array of sophisticated features and techniques puts it ahead of all other paint programs for the Amiga.

Microillusions are particularly proud of *Photon Paint*'s brush manipulation functions, including tilt, rotate, re-size mapping on 3D objects and luminance. Plus you get a 64 colour palette with 4,096 colour alterations, "state of the art" surface mapping, real time drawing tool operations, full blend mode, two types of fill function, adding and subtracting colours and full dithering (*????? — not-very-Technical Ed*). Who, as they say, could ask for anything more?

You could? Well then perhaps you should also check out Electronic Arts' hot new video animation program, *Deluxe Video 1.2*. This spanking new product allows you to generate animated art sequences and titles, add background music and sounds and store the results on disk for use in business presentations, educational environments, home movies, animated commercials and, dearest of all to our little rawk 'n' roll hearts, music promo videos.

With *DV 1.2* you can generate 3D text which you can then rotate, flip, expand and shrink to distraction, and there are a whopping 27 different v. useful special FX, including strobe, wipes, fades, multi-frame animation, zoom, shrink and colour cycle.

It can also be used with Genlock, thereby enabling you to overlay images created by yourself onto pre-recorded videotape. Once again there's a high degree of compatability between *DV 1.2* and a whole host of sound and graphics packages.

So what you are waiting for? That pools win, perhaps — each of these two cool products will retail at a cool £69.99 a piece.

AMIGA

Amiga
Ocean
Price: £24.95



A breather back in the wizard's den.

WIZ BALL

It's not every day you take your cat out to collect paint, now is it? Well, not unless you're a wizard with a cat called Nifta and you live on Wizworld. Once a lively, colourful place, Wizworld is now drab and grey and not very much fun really. The evil Zark and his nasty sprites are responsible for stealing all the colour and, computer game scenarios being computer game scenarios, it's up to you to put it all back.

Wizworld is split into eight levels stacked like a sandwich with Level One as the bottom slice of bread. Taking control of the Wiz in his Wizball you have to negotiate the landscape features, shooting aliens and collecting the pearls left behind. Each pearl collected advances the highlight through the icons at the top of the screen, and a quick wiggle on the joystick activates the feature. It's wise to collect the thrust and anti-grav first as they make the Wizball more controlable. The ball is initially tricky to control, requiring left and right hand spin to determine its direction of bounce. The next most important icon to activate is the Catalite, as Nifta can collect the droplets of colour, formed when the blobs are shot. Holding down the fire button transfers control to the Catalite, allowing it to buzz around the screen, leaving the Wizball stationary and vulnerable. But the cat is basically expendable — you can always collect some more pearls and activate another cat on its demise. Other useful functions include increased firepower, a smart bomb and a shield.

Each level requires three colours to complete it, and this usually involves mixing differing proportions of red, green and blue — the three available colours.

A cauldron at the bottom right of the screen fills with the target colour as you collect red, green and blue droplets, and its up to you to collect the correct amounts. When the cauldron is full you enter a bonus stage in which you get to shoot some more aliens and possibly earn an extra life, and then it's a quick stint in the Wizlab where the Wiz puts the colour collected back into the landscape and Nifta drinks milk to replenish his nine lives.

But it's not all daubing colour willy nilly. The aliens get nastier as you get nearer to colouring in Wizworld, and not all of the colour droplets are what they seem. Catching a purple droplet sends the cat mad and you lose control, while a light blue droplet results in a Fifth Raid where police ships zoom in for the kill, sirens blaring. Black droplets turn out the lights, and the only way you can see again is by shooting all of the aliens on a level. Fortunately there are two helpful colours — the white droplets give extra lives, and a grey one can give Nifta 128 lives.

There's not really much point in making comparisons between the original 64 version and this Amiga incarnation, although I would say the 64 version has the edge. Peter Johnson has produced a marvellous conversion of an exceptionally good game, enhancing certain aspects, such as the graphics, without detriment to the gameplay. The Filth Raid is now a superb interlude complete with sampled siren. The music is good, but I prefer the more psychedelic nature of the original — it somehow suits the bizzare concept much more than this supermarket stuff. Anyroad, *Wizball* on the Amiga is a classy enough piece of software in its own right; beautifully presented and extremely playable.

Gary Penn

C.U. Screen Star



Wiz and Niffa purrsued by noisy Bill-tops.



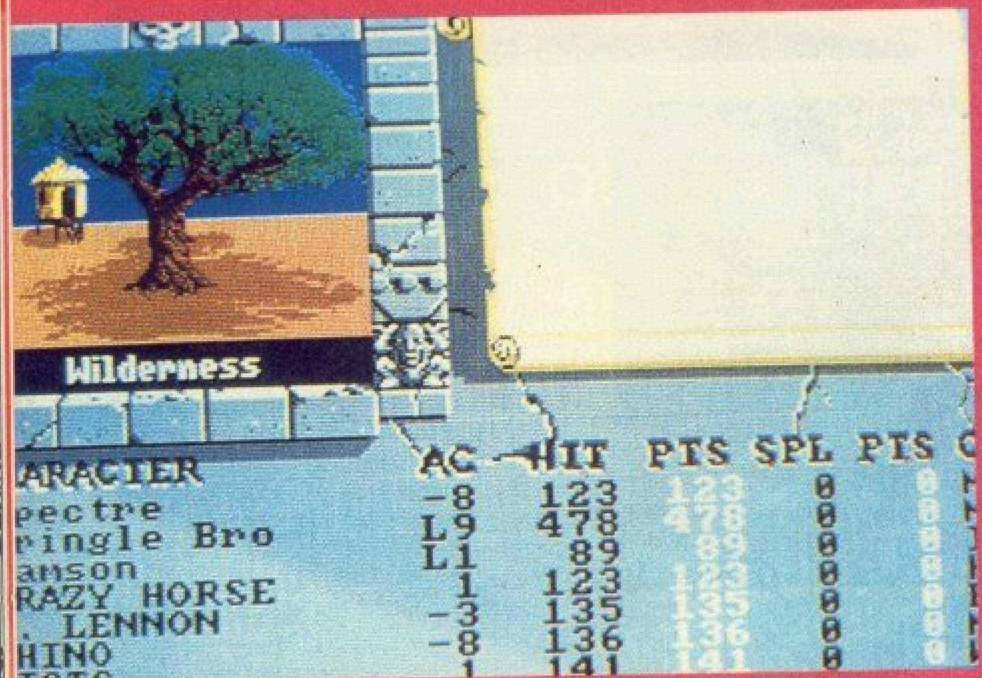
Gobble those gorgeous globules.

WIZBALL — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Video
Audio
Toughness
Endurance
VFM

CU RATING: 8



BARD'S TALE II: THE DESTINY KNIGHT

Fifty per cent larger than its illustrious predecessor, Electronic Arts' *Bard's Tale II* finds you trying to foil the dastardly mercenaries from Lestradae who have stolen the Destiny Wand, forged aeons ago by Archmage Turin to maintain peace and tranquility in your locality, broken it into seven pieces and scattered these about the realm. You've got to recruit a band of adventurers to retrieve the seven pieces and reassemble 'em. Action decisions to be taken in real time, anti-magic zones to avoid, monsters to defeat (by force or, preferably, by wit) and LOADS of items to collect and carry with you all feature as before in the whizzbang adventure extravaganza. Available any day now, BTII will have those brains humming through the long, wet summer knights.

AMIGA FUTURE

BETTER DEAD THAN ALIEN

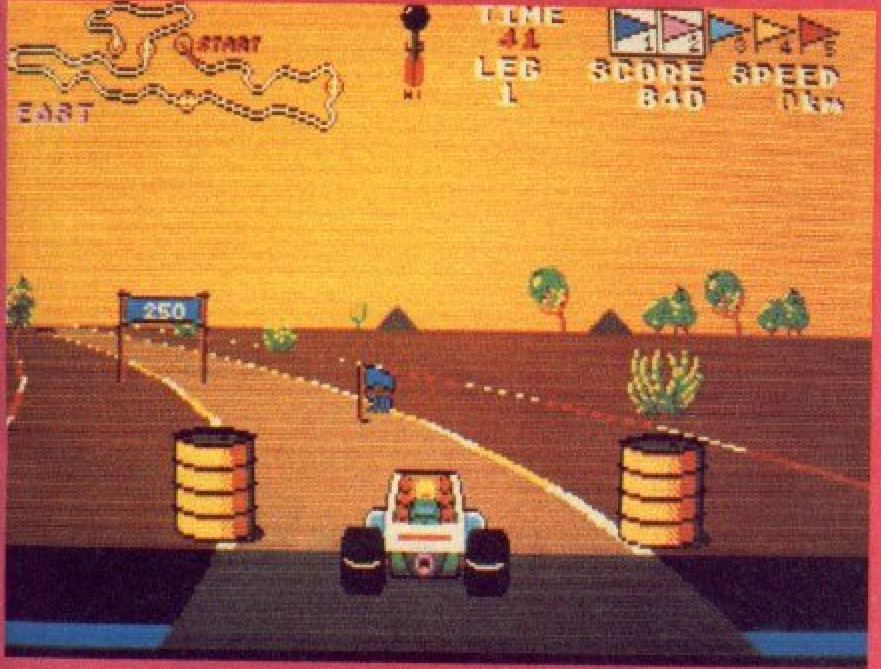
New boys Electra certainly seem determined that nobody's going to call them space pinkos. The title of this, their first product, veers seriously towards alienism. Not for hero Brad, long hours at the negotiation tables of the United Planets in Ursa Minor — leave all that guff to cress-munching Douglas Adams followers. The only thing these other-wordly types understand is a mouthful of white hot laser. Armed with his super-zapper there's nobody more suited to the task than our Brad. Through 25 levels he blasts his way, negotiating meteorite storms, picking up energy pods left behind by dying extra-terrorists and, to quote the rather gung ho press release, engaging in close quarters combat with "the ugliest life forms you will be lucky never to see". Now, that's what we call boldly going.





FOUNDATION'S WASTE

Another new name in the business, and a rather formidable one at that is Exocet Software. Their first game, *Foundation's Waste,* puts you in the shoes of a rebel pilot in Federation custody. Clink hasn't had a reforming effect on you — in fact, you've had half a dozen escape attempts, and the word's been passed that the next time they're going to run out of patience. Nevertheless, your motto is "give me liberty or give me death", so once again it's a quick shimmy down the cell-block drain pipe, and leg it to a Federation hanger where you manage to acquire one of their space craft. Thereafter, you've got to fly over power plants, oceans wastelands and, finally, into space, pursued and beset by myriad Federation goons. Can you escape? Can you wait?



BUGGY BOY

What with the trees blossoming, the birds singing, and Mike Pattenden's thoughts once again returning wistfully to the tennis career that could have been, what better time could there be for Elite to announce the impending 16-bit launch of that most summery of driving games *Buggy Boy?* None, that's what we say up here in CU Towers, as we don our very loud Hawaiian surf shorts, break open the XXXX and settle down for a hearty bouncealong in that most lovable of buggies. Flags, footballs and flying through the air — all this, in glorious Amigacolour and sounding like a squillion dollars. Well, who could ask for anything more?

SHOCK PREVIEW

RETURN TO GENESIS

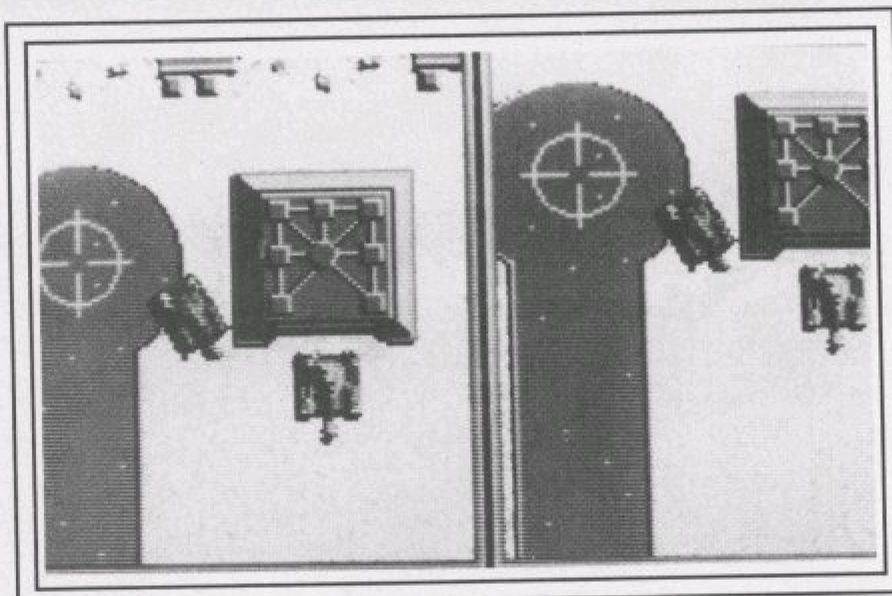
This month should see the release of the Steve Bak's latest creation, *Return To Genesis.* For his next trick, Steve (previously responsible for *Gold Runner* and *Karate Kid II*), will transport us far into the future, all the way to 4224 AD, in fact. Seems that the Clonworl 50 scientists — 12 of the galaxy's top brains who each volunteered to be cloned 50 times way back in 2660, then rendered immortal and finally dispatched to different corners of the universe to work eternally for mankind's good — have been forced into slavery by marauding Mechanauts. Now it's up to you to board your mighty starfighter to release these good fellows — all 600 of 'em so they can continue their life-preserving work! (In other words, it's a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up, guys).





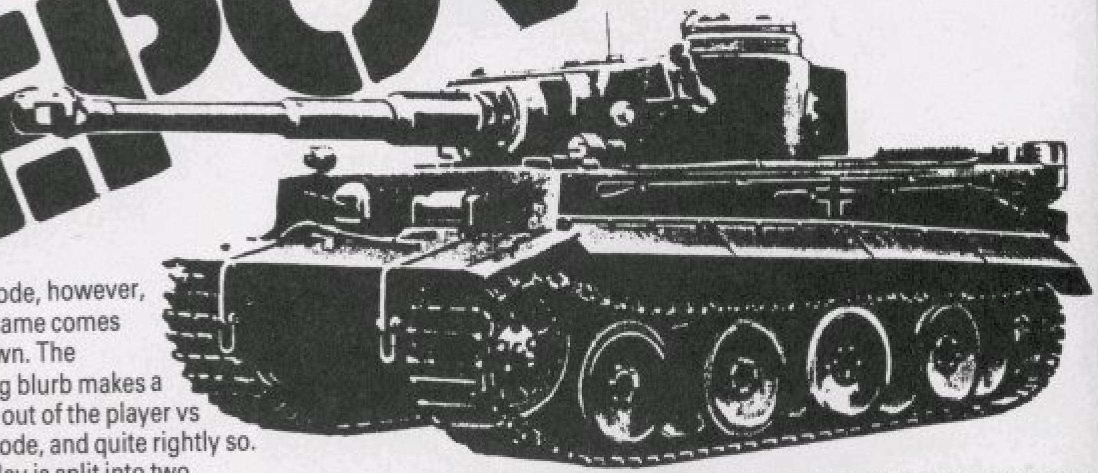
VIRUS

David Braben's *Zarch* was a massive hit on the Archimedes (did we hear someone say "the only game on the Archimedes"?), but it's due out next month on the far meaner machine under the title *Virus.* You're guiding a hoverplane over a fairly nifty undulating 3D landscape, in a desparate attempt to halt invading aliens who are polluting the surface of this green and pleasant planet with a deadly red virus. You've got to blast just about everything in sight, from virus-spreaders to fighters, each of which will need different tactics to defeat. This colourful Amiga blast-about will be released on the Firebird label in July.



Coo, another thrilling picture of the two tasty tanks in action.

FIREPOWER



Firepower
Microillusions
Price: £19.95

Firepower puts you in the driving seat of a tank traversing a huge desert blowing away anything unfortunate enough to get in your way, with the aim of capturing the enemy's flag.

The desert is spanned by a network of roads which are used to get from location to location. You can drive over the desert but this slows the tank down. It won't be long, though, before you come across hostile gun emplacements, which are easily identifiable as they're a different colour to your own. Fortunately you have the weaponry to dispose of them and after a few hits from your missiles they explode to the sound of sampled BOOM leaving just a smouldering pile of rubble. In fact just about every ground feature can be destroyed, one way or another, and there's some serious fun to be had as you trundle around laying waste to anything and everything.

It's important to remember that tanks don't run on fresh air and if your limited supply of fuel should hit zero, your tank very thoughtfully explodes to ensure that it doesn't get taken by the enemy. Enemy fuel depots are rife, and just waiting to be destroyed in order to replenish your tank's supplies.

By battling through your opponent's heavily guarded territory and wiping out his home base, you can capture his flag, and by returning to base with it, you can sit back in the smug satisfaction that you've completed the mission. That's about all there is to the one player mode, apart from a few sub-tasks such as rescuing your fellow soldiers from the battlefield as they run towards you, and depositing them safely at a nearby medical station.

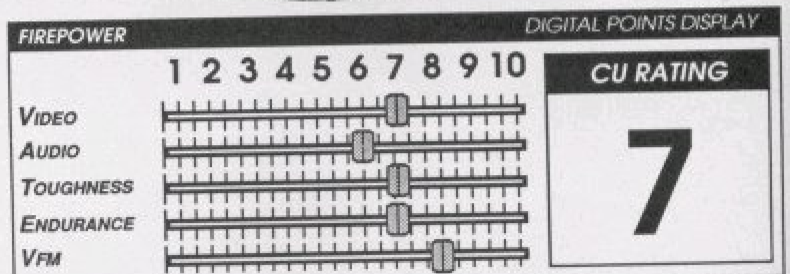
It's in the two player mode, however, that the game comes into its own. The packaging blurb makes a big thing out of the player vs player mode, and quite rightly so. The display is split into two independently scrolling screens, one for each player, and there's a real sense of competition as you and a friend attempt to blow away as much of each other's territory as possible in your quest for the opposition's flag. What a laugh.

Firepower features some attractively designed and well animated graphics (although the scrolling is a little jerky when you get up to high speed) and plenty of explosions.

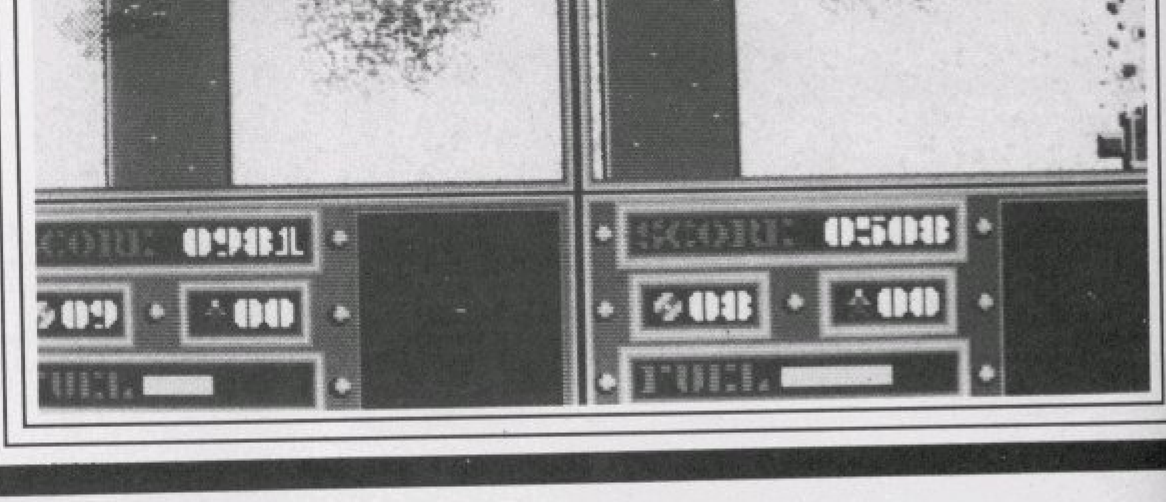
The action can prove a little too tedious on your own, but this minor quibble shouldn't put you off indulging in this enjoyable and well executed game. If you were a fan of *Jackal* or *Tank* in the arcades and are looking for something of that genre, hang some fluffy dice from your monitor for authenticity and get trundling.

Gary Whitta

AMIGA



Boom-a-bang-bang belly laughs abound in Firepower.



THEXDER

Amiga
Activision/
Sierra On-Line
Price: £19.95

If you've ever wanted to see a classic example of the term 'hard sell' you would be well advised to take a look at the blurb on the packaging of *Thexder*, the latest release from Sierra via Activision. So much space is used up to tell you how the game 'offers more music, animation and gameplay than you ever thought possible from a computer game' that there's very little room left to tell you what the game is all about!

There's also the impressive claim that *Thexder* has sold half a million copies in Japan. However when you realise that many *average* a million the claim falls flat.

Thexder is a robot and one day, for some inexplicable reason it has decided to risk its cybernetic limbs and circuit board by venturing into a huge fortress inhabited by a variety of weird but not necessarily wonderful creatures. It's a case of *Rolling Thunder* meets *Barbarian.* Thexder runs from left to right through the futuristic complex, fighting off the hordes of nasties with his eyeball lasers (yes, they do fire out of his eyeballs!). The lasers lock onto their target automatically, so no targetting skill is needed. You do however need to be quick on the draw (blink?) to wipe them out as they're infuriatingly fast and deplete your energy level equally quickly should they touch you.

It won't be long before you come across downward pathways which, if you wish to explore, require you to transmute into an airborne jet fighter (yes, it's Decepticons and Autobots time) by hitting the SHIFT key. It's then possible to fly deeper into the maze, and deeper into danger. The REALLY nasty nasties soon appear and range from mutant jellyfish to rotating hamburgers, all of which can sap your energy in a few seconds, should you stray into them. If you can survive the meanies long enough, you can progress to the next level. And that, apart from the ability to shoot certain aliens to retrieve energy, is all there is to it. There are no real game objectives, apart from trying to get as far as you can into the complex. There aren't even any end-of-level guardians to fight. Coupled with the incredibly infuriating gameplay (watch in

THEXDER	DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY (1–10)
Video	4
Audio	3
Toughness	6
Endurance	3
VFM	3
CU RATING	**3**



The camera fails to capture the high-speed thrills of the abysmal blasta.

STRA

Amiga
GO!/Rainbow Arts
Price: £19.99

Okay, Softgang, hands up which one of you devised the concept for *Strange New World.* A-ha, I thought as much. None of you. And why? Could it possibly be because your latest release is a *Scramble* rip-off?

Oh, well. I suppose a crusty variant of an even crustier arcade game had to come along on the wundermachine sooner or later, and here it is. If *Scramble* was before your time, it's basically a VERY cut-down version of *Nemesis.* Once you've stripped away the totally pathetic plot, you're left with a left to right scrolling shoot-em up. The

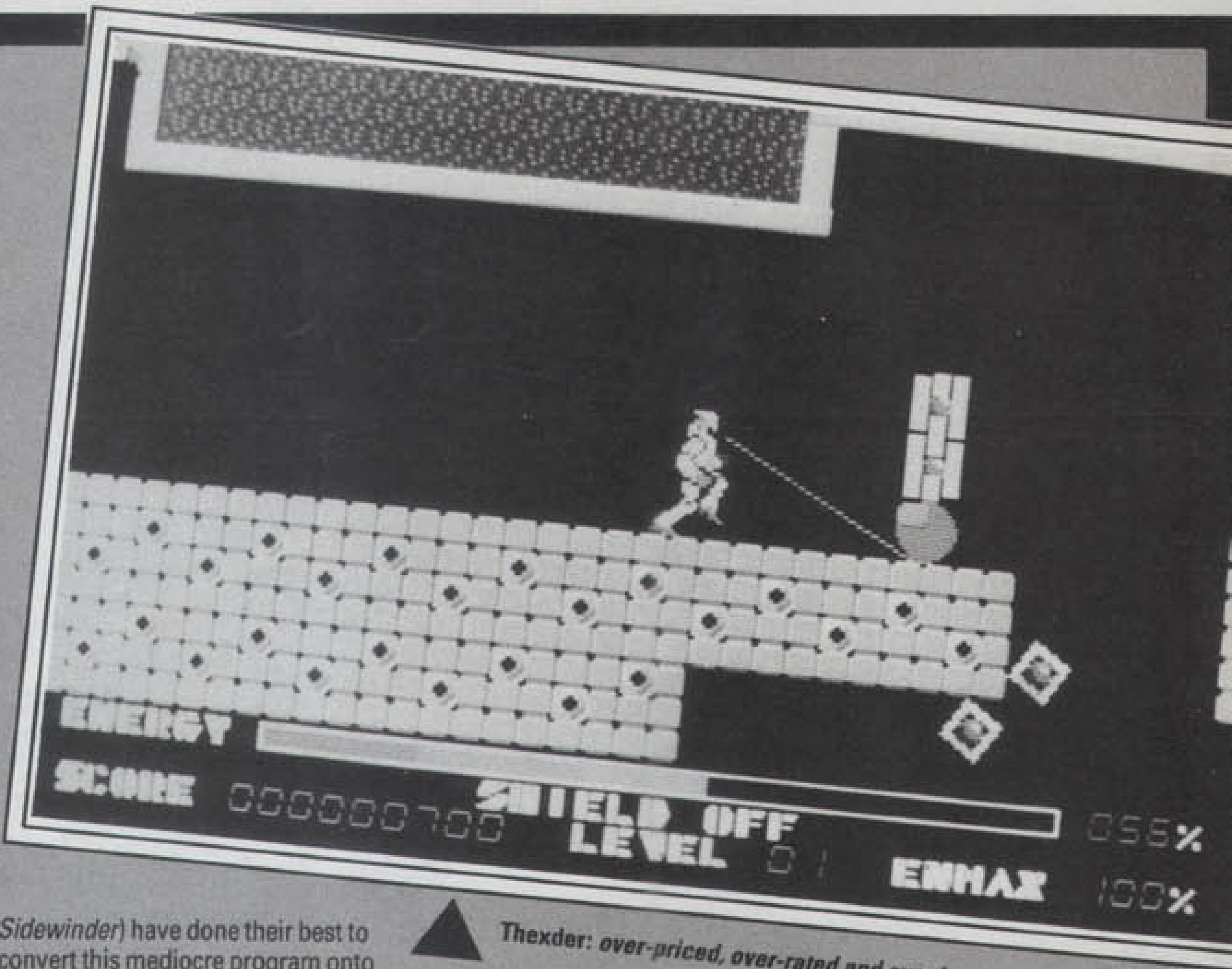
bewilderment as your energy drops from 100% to zero in less than three seconds) is what makes *Thexder* one of the least enjoyable and most tiresome Amiga games I've ever played.

Had the game possessed the amazing graphics and sound the packaging continually promised, it might have been more exciting to play, but it fails to deliver in these departments as well. The alien sprites are minute and poorly defined, with only a few frames of animation (even Thexder himself hobbles as if he's suffering from multiple verrukas) whilst the backdrops, if you can call them that are basic and badly coloured with little variation from level to level.

There's no improvement sonically either. An awful Spectrumesque 'tune' grates throughout the entire proceedings, with the only alternative being the weak and sparsely used sound effects. To make matters worse, there's an abomination of Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata on the title screen. I can hear the great man himself turning in his grave as I write. If that wasn't enough to make you invest in a pair of earplugs, the speech will. It's in Japanese!

Sygernistic Software (the people responsible for the excellent *Sidewinder*) have done their best to convert this mediocre program onto the Amiga, but after 30 minutes play you're left wondering why they even bothered (if you're still awake). I suspect they were offered loadsayen. A shame really, as games such as *Wizball* and the incredible *Interceptor* show what the Amiga is capable of, so why we're still receiving drivel such as this when it's been made quite clear that Amiga owners want and deserve much better is beyond me. This won't sell half-a-dozen on the Amiga let along half a million.

Gary Whitta



Thexder: *over-priced, over-rated and over here.*

NGE NEW WORLD

bottom of the screen is occupied by the 2D landscape which houses the numerous ground targets such as . . . well, I don't really know what they're supposed to be. Anyway, you can destroy them with your missiles, and that's all that matters, isn't it? While you're blowing away the desirable residences of innocent alien families, airborne nasties come at you in waves, usually in vertical formation, and can be picked off with ease. Just keep firing your laser and let them aimlessly stumble into it.

Fuel is an important factor. Let it drop to zero and you plummet to the floor helplessly, losing you one of your three lives. To prevent this it's necessary to knock out the fuel depots (the grey splodges) with your bombs. Another threat is represented by the rocket drones that occasionally launch themselves upwards in an attempt to destroy you. Add to this an invincible ship that does it's best to home in on you every so often and you would expect a pretty tough game. But you don't get it. It's an absolute doddle. After 20 minutes of playing the game I was close to clocking it. The only thing that stopped me was failing to refuel, due to the infuriatingly difficult to execute bomb controls.

Cosmetically, the game totally fails to redeem itself. The graphics would not look out of place on a C16. The main sprite looks like a condom and I've seen more realistic spaceships inside a packet of KP *Alien Spacers*. There is no variation in the graphics at all, apart from a slight change of landscape scenery every level.

The sound is amazing. Amazingly bad, that is. I was expecting great things sonically, due to the nice tune that hits you upon loading, but the effects wear off somewhat when you realise the jingle repeats itself every five seconds. The FX are little more than a joke, with 'blip blip' firing effects and second rate explosions.

Strange New World takes all the bad elements of the worst Amiga software around and rolls them into one. It's a walkover to play, has dire graphics and sound and even worse, it's a clone. If your dosh is burning a hole in your pocket and the urge for destruction grabs you, go out and buy *Sidewinder*.

Gary Whitta

AMIGA






-18 INTERCEPTOR™
C.U. POSTER No.9

AMIGA

Amiga
Electronic Arts
Price: £24.95



A-ha! The sunken galleon is found!

RETURN TO ATLANTIS

Return To Atlantis puts you in the lead boots of a newly recruited agent of the Marine Foundation, a sort of aquatic A-Team. The Foundation has been commissioned to complete a series of watery missions, and this is where you come in.

After the film-like opening credits, you are asked to input your name and decide what sort of personality you're going to have by putting six personal attributes into order of priority. Your alter ego is then saved to disk (a blank is required) and you are given your mission briefing by a holographic representation of the Foundation President, accompanied by some dodgy digitised speech.

You can now leave Foundation HQ and proceed to the seedy Sea-Thief Cafe, where you interrogate the locals for some clues concerning your mission. All of the five characters, ranging from a cantankerous old biddy to a millionaire Arab Sheikh are exquisitely drawn and animated, and their facial expressions and tone of voice (more speech here) show what kind of mood they're in. A small list of options is used to converse with the locals, including the ability to bribe and threaten.

When you've gleaned the necessary info you can leave the Cafe and board your command vessel, the Viceroy, and set off for your mission location. While in flight a world map is displayed with a snaking red line to indicate the Viceroy's flight path (*Indiana Jones* style). When you reach your destination, the Viceroy is shown side-on bobbing up and down in the water with a cutaway section in the hull to allow you to see inside. From here you can move around the ship to access facilities such as the Gear Room where you can equip yourself with tools, the Medical beam where you can restore any health points lost and ART, the invaluable shipboard computer that enables you to communicate with base, view your current status and most importantly, plan your dive using the 'scan' feature.

And, at last it's time to get your feet wet. The view changes to show your diver underwater. The diver sprite here is huge, and very well animated as he swims in and out of the screen as well as left and right. The ocean floor is depicted similarly to the ancient *Rescue On Fractalus* ie: fast but jerkily updated. The aquatic life is lovely too. Even the baiter lights on the Angler fish glow!

The main grief under the water comes from the crab-bots who aren't, contrary to popular belief, a scabby posterior, but are in fact metallic crustaceans who won't hesitate to drop their depth charges on you. Luckily you can fight back with a laser that's targetted using a set of cross-hairs.

Also on your side is RUF, a robotic mini-sub which can be programmed to locate the items you're looking for, as well as to venture into the more dangerous locations before you do. When you finally locate what you're looking for, you can beam it up to the Viceroy and, if necessary, beam it back down to a more suitable location.

You don't get all day to complete the mission though. All the missions carry a time limit, your air runs out at an alarming rate, and constant visits to the Viceroy are needed to replenish your supplies.

On completing a mission your personal attributes take a short jump upwards and you are given the next mission. The missions themselves (there are 14), range from recovering the treasure from a sunken Spanish galleon and saving marooned scientists from asphyxiation, to finding the lost city of Atlantis itself.

Return To Atlantis is a brilliant, original piece of software. The different game elements have been combined very well, and as such it should appeal to arcade gamers and strategists alike. Aesthetically it's impressive, with excellent graphics all round and sound. This, along with the great presentation, both in the game and in the packaging makes *Return To Atlantis* another class game from EA for the Amiga. If you want a game with real depth (ouch) that you'll come back to time after time, you can't do much better than this.

Gary Whitta

RETURN TO ATLANTIS — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY (scale 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10)

Video	8
Audio	6
Toughness	7
Endurance	8
VFM	7
CU RATING	**8**

Load your utility belt and prepare to dive . . .



Grill the locals at the Café



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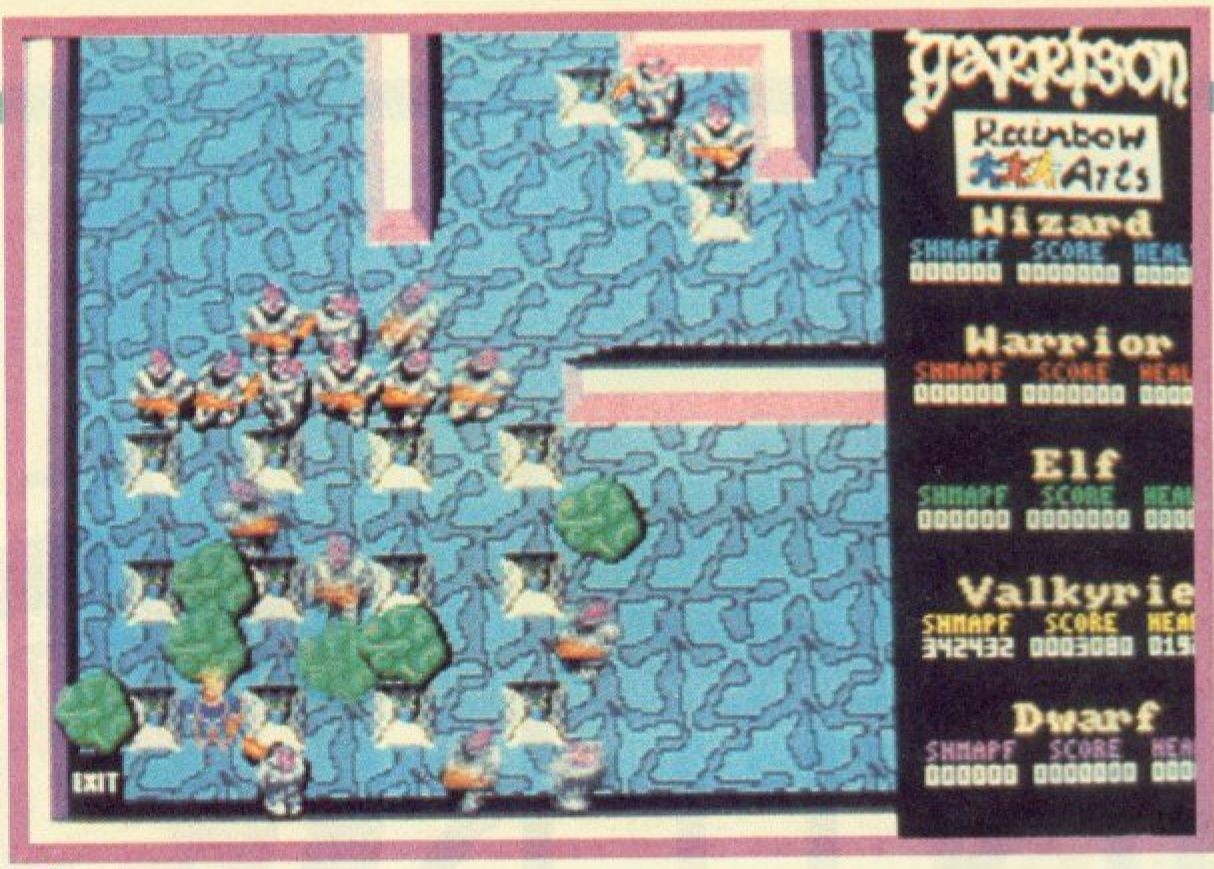
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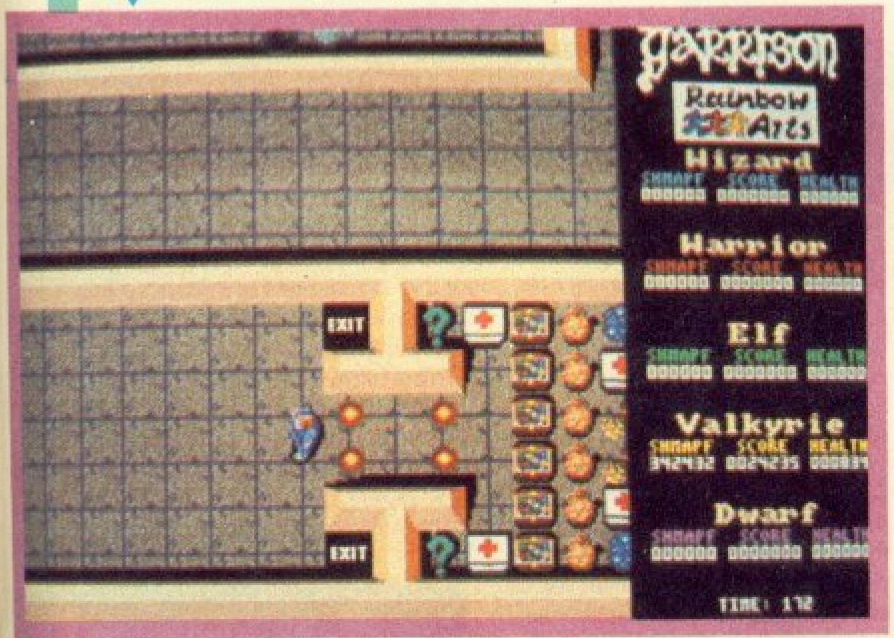
US Gold/ Rainbow Arts
Price: £24.99



Battle through the green orc-spawning brains.

GARRISON 2

Cells full of ghosts (ho hum) . . .



. . . And — surprise, surprise — chests full of treasure!



Those in the know will be aware that *Gauntlet II*, now available on the 64 was more of the hit D&D coin-op *Gauntlet* with extra features like moving walls, acid pools, sticky ground and new beasties. This is true also for *Garrison II*, the follow-up to Rainbow Arts' well-received clone.

The major problem I can see with it is the close similarity it bears to its predecessor. Extra features aside there's little in *Garrison II* to make you buy it if you already have *Garrison I*. Things might have been different had Rainbow Arts remedied some of the deficiencies of the first game. I'm thinking particularly of the way all the characters look the same unless you have one meg. Whilst you obviously know which character you have under control, and they have different weaponry, you can, when things get a bit hectic and you're bunched up close together, get confused.

A sequel, to me, means an improved and updated version, but RA haven't done that. Instead they've produced more of the same, with different rooms and ghouls, but the same characters, speed and feel. That said, the game's original good points are still there as well, with good graphics, and a fair reproduction of the hectic *Gauntlet* gameplay. There are 128 new rooms, and a number of new features like stun tiles and lava pools mentioned earlier.

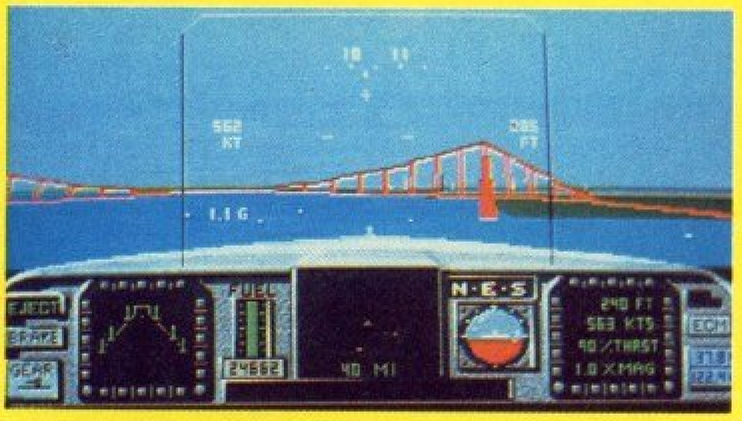
Unless you missed out on the first *Garrison* I'd find it difficult to recommend *Garrison II*. It simply doesn't offer enough beyond its predecessor and I have to admit I'm getting a little tired of this kind of game, even when it's this good . . .

Mike Pattenden

GARRISON II — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	7
Audio	5
Toughness	8
Endurance	7
Vfm	7

CU RATING: 6



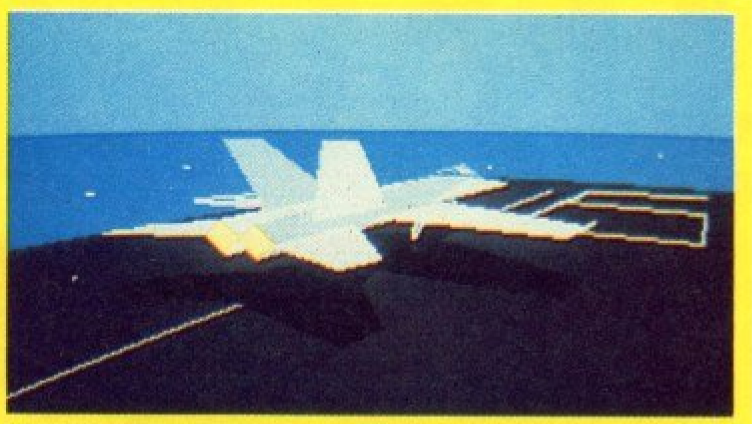
Electronic Arts
Price: £24.95

Oh my god he's going to fly under the Golden Gate!

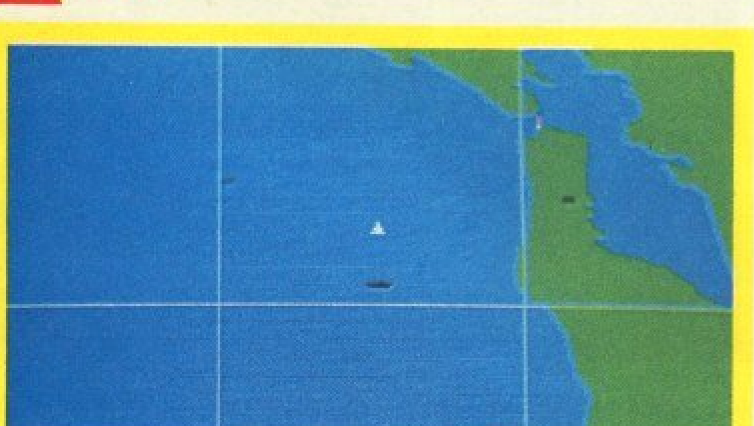


F/A-18 INTERCEPT

COMMODORE USER SUPERSTAR



Scramble!



Map of San Francisco bay showing base and carrier.

"Oh, wow! Wooaah! Bogeys all over me!" Urgh! What's happening in CU's computer room? Well Gary Penn (callsign 'Mohican') and myself (callsign 'Hothead') are involved in a desperate life or death dogfight with two Mig-29s.

Interceptor will rock you back on your heels when you see it. We've put in quite a few hours flying time and I still get a buzz watching it. As a flight simulator it's no big deal. If you want to know what it's like to fly a jet fighter there are more exacting games around. Where EA's game scores is with the celebrated look and feel. It looks fantastic and feels great.

The first thing you'll notice when you get up and running with it is the beautiful filled-in 3D solid effect. But the real thrill with it is the way you can switch viewpoints both inside and *outside* the aircraft just by tapping the keys on the numerical keypad. I guarantee you'll be darting around watching the action from more angles than a protractor. For some really great effects switch to a rear view as you take off from the carrier, or watch as you eject from a stricken jet as the canopy flies off and a man with a swirling chute flies out. That should convince you this is the business.

Interceptor will take you through a series of progressively tough missions. A menu allows you to select from a number of different scenarios, but it's a good idea to kick off with a demo to get your mouth salivating and eyes a-bulging. You can then take up a trainer and practice a few manoeuvres yourself but if you're any kind of a cool mutha you'll want to get stuck into some serious scrappin'.

To get further into *Interceptor* you have to qualify for mission selection. That means earning some wings, taking off from the carrier (easy) and landing (not quite so easy). Taking off in your steel bird is a breeze, just

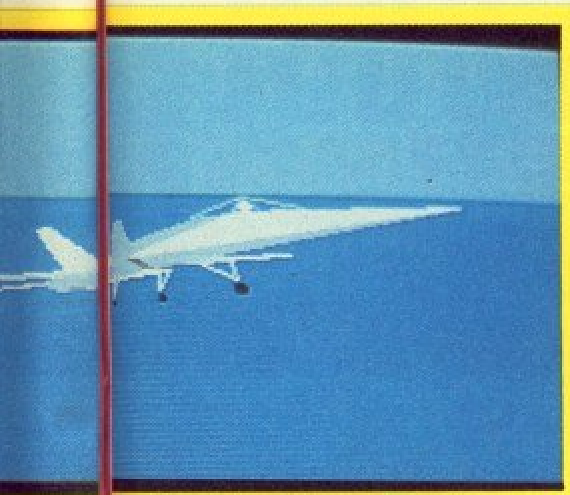


FA/18 INTERCEPTOR — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

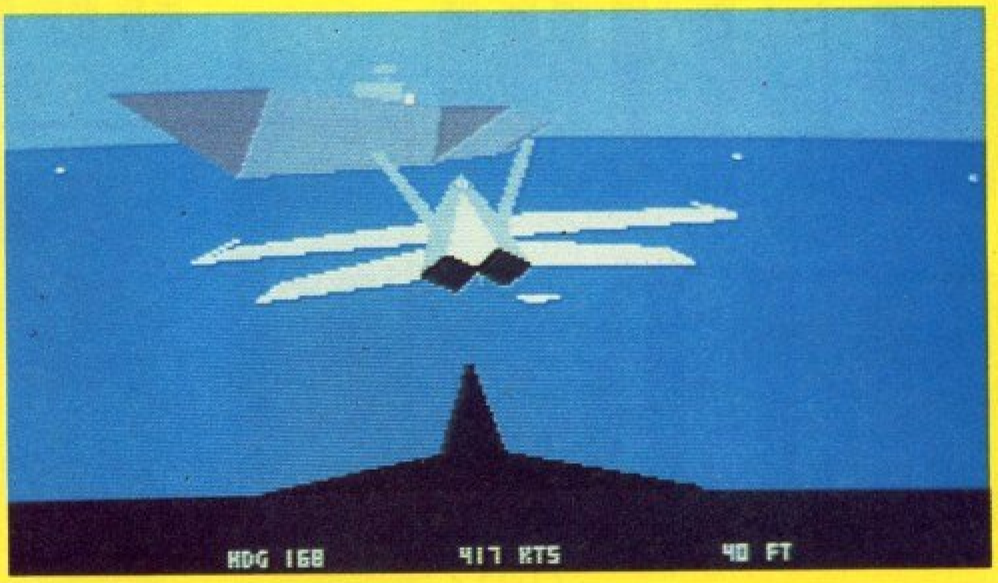
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	9
Audio	7
Toughness	8
Endurance	9
VFM	8

CU RATING: 9

AMIGA

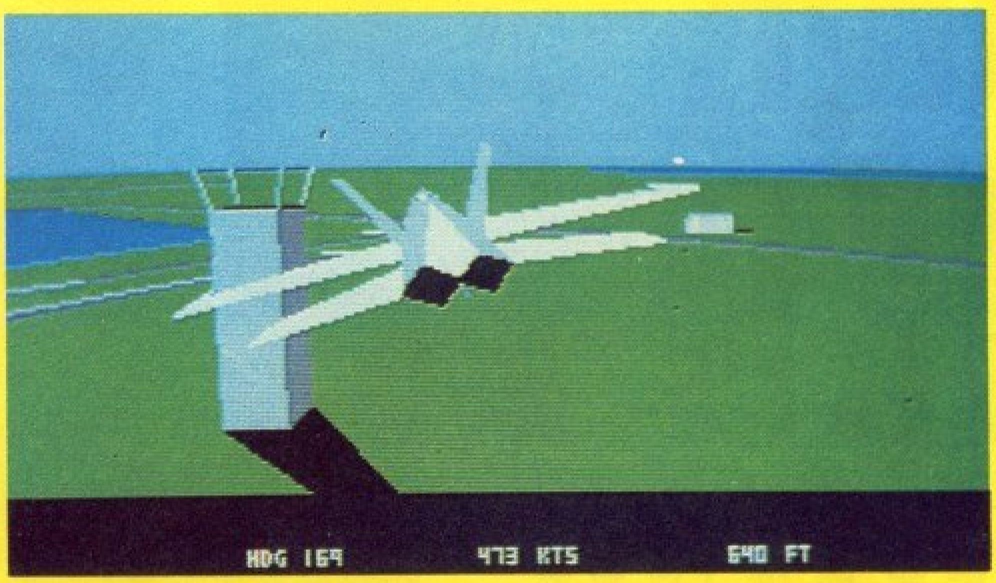


Ready or not here we come . . .



Pull up! Pull up!

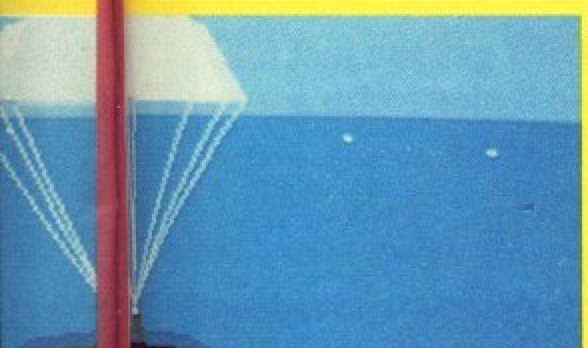
TOR



Buzzing the control tower

power up to 90% thrust and pull the nose up as you go off the edge and you're away. A couple of attempts and you'll be doing a barrel roll off the flight deck and upsetting the guy in the control tower by making him spill his coffee in his lap. Put some distance between yourself and the ship by increasing your thrust to 100% and tapping the plus key — this locks in the afterburner (nip out to the rear view for a sight of the exhausts, flame on — wowza!). Make a wide turn and power down (or 180° loop if you're a flash son of a Top Gun like me) and head back to the ship.

You may not make it though, because Russian Migs are pretty cheeky about flying around the bay of San Francisco and you may find yourself involved in a bit of aerial fisticuffs. The dogfights are hot stuff, and whilst they prove Interceptor to be more in the mould of DI's *Fighter Pilot* than Sublogic's *Jet*, it's got big, shiny brass knobs on. Take her up to Mach 1½ and 40,000 feet and come out of the sun on an unsuspecting Mig. Bang! Suck on that comrade! Old Ivan is no sucker and he'll be twisting and turning on your ass before you know it, IR missiles at the ready. Make sure your ECM (Electronic Counter Measures) are on and make ready to spill more chaff than an Okie farmer. Jees! That was an IR missile passing right past the canopy!



Better wet than dead . . .

Interceptor, as you might have guessed, gets you a bit involved.

Landing the jet back on deck is a bit of a swine. Two things to remember here, make sure you're above 145 feet otherwise you'll slap right into the carrier (nasty) and make sure you land on the back — it won't accept that you've completed the task unless you do. The manual does not make this clear, so consider yourself well briefed.

One little moan here. Well actually it's more of a whinge really. *Interceptor* has a bug. You can land on the sea! And what's more you can't get out of it, the game locks up and you have to abort

If you do manage to land on the carrier you'll be able to go on to the qualified missions. The first has you intercepting unidentified aircraft. You take off from the ground this time and you'll have to find the airstrip if you want to get back, because neither of the two planes you can fly are carrier-based. No arrestor hook, see? And when it instructs you not to engage *unless attacked* it means it. This is Visual Confirmation.

Mission Two is a defence operation. Scramble from the Enterprise and take out a couple of Migs. Other missions (no we haven't completed them yet, but Free America's depending on us, so we won't fail) include intercepting a couple of stolen aircraft, and doing a search and rescue operation. Oh, on the intercept mission ignore the instructions and blow the stealing sons of Stalin out the sky.

Interceptor really is quite staggering stuff. It's fast, it's a dream to play and just as nice to look at. I can imagine games appearing with more depth, but until then this is my fave. Get one and go gettem!

Mike Pattenden

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AMIGA TiPS

FAERY TALE ADVENTURE

(Microillusions/Activision)

With Activision recently taking over the distribution of Microillusions product in the UK, now seems as good a time as any to give you some handy hints. These were provided by Joe Best from Battersea in London.

Tambry

Be sure to collect the Jade Skull hidden in one of the houses, then use it on a group of weapon-wielding monsters and collect any goodies left behind. This is a good start.

Isle of Sorcery

Having left Tambry, armed with a sword, make your way to Turtle Point and kill the snakes next to the turtle eggs. A turtle should appear and allow you to ride on its back (incidentally, there's a shell at the Watchtower which you can use to call the turtle to you if you lose him). Ride to the Isle Of Sorcery and enter the Ice Palace (you need a blue key to do this). The Scorceress within will give you a Golden Statue. Also, the more you talk to her the more your Luck increases.

Grimwood

Make your way through the maze-like forest of Grimwood and find the Witch's Castle. This isn't easy, but if it's any help you have to go through two cave systems, the first by sinking in a swamp and the second through a gap in the trees. When you reach the castle and find the witch, don't walk into her line of sight — kill her with arrows or a Sun Stone (found in one of the keeps in the mountains). Take the lasso left behind.

Swan Isle

Use the turtle to get to here, then ride the swan with your lasso. You can now use it to travel over mountains, and it's a lot faster than walking.

Marhiem

Here the King will tell you to rescue his daughter. She can be found in a keep surrounded by mountains just below Marhiem. When you have rescued the king's daughter you will be given a Gold Statue. Coo.

Hemsath's Tomb

Herein lie (surprise surprise) Hemsath's bones, found by negotiating a small maze of doors. Take his bones to the Graveyard (the Tombstone between Tambry and Marhiem on the map).

The Graveyard

Wait around until midnight then enter the crypt. Swap the bones with the Wraith Lord for a crystal which disables the force field in the Necromancer's castle.

The Dragon's Lair

This is found in the Icy Mountains to the north-west of Holmn and is represented on the map by a dark blob in the mountains. Look for a Ranger who will give you directions. Once in the lair, keep going right and then up to find the dragon (listen out for a banging noise to make sure you are near). When you meet the dragon, use the ring to freeze him, then keep hitting him until he stops firing. With the dragon out of the way you should come across some corridors — explore them until you find a wand, used to kill the Necromancer.

Plain Of Grief

At the bottom of the Plain Of Grief, among the Black Mountains, you will find the Necromancer's Castle. Walk along the small line of tiles to the left of the lava moat and enter the castle. Now go through the blue force field and into the gateway to the Astral World.

Astral World

Slowly follow the path (watch out for the blue tiles as they speed you up) and try not to fall off the edge. After a while you should reach a large Black Hole. Walk backwards into it where you will meet the Necromancer in a fight to the death. Use your wand to kill him, then pick up the Talisman he leaves behind to finish the game.

In General

To enter the mysterious City Of Azal you must visit the Oasis in the Burning Waste at night.
Orbs allow you to see hidden doors.
Blue Stones teleport you when you're in a Stone Ring.
Vials boost your Vitality.
Green Jewels improve your night sight.
Bird Totems give you a map of the surrounding area.
Rings freeze attacking monsters.
Jade Skulls act as smart bombs.
Search Wraiths before they disappear to collect more white keys or Jade Skulls.

AMIGA TIPS

(Novagen)

Here we are then . . . as promised last month, the lowest possible low-down on the psuedo sequel to Mercenary. Actually that's a bit of a porky — there are a few odds 'n' sods for you to discover on your travels. Oh, and you will have to map your progress, too. Sorry, but you can't have everything all of the time — or something equally condescending

MERC… THE SECO…

DOWN (UNDER)

The Second City is situated on the other side of Targ and is basically a binary remix of the first. The map is different, most of the useful objects have different uses, and just to make things a little more interesting (and difficult) there are a few new features.

One of the most notable differences is the prices of saleable objects — not only do they greatly vary in value between the Palyars and Mechanoids, but most are worth far more than before which means you can amass a total of nine million credits! (I shall refrain from mentioning loadsamoney). Here's where the smart and not-so-smart cookies are depositing their goods . . .

The CATERING PROVISIONS (found in a room just off the hangar at 03-04- you need a pentagonal key) should be left in the KITCHEN (bottom level of the Palyar Colony Craft) for 151,021 credit reward.

Collect the ESSENTIAL 12939 SUPPLY from a room just off the hangar at 05-13 (you can teleport there via the right-hand of the two transporters in the hangar at 13-08), then take it to the CONFERENCE ROOM on the bottom level of the Palyar Colony Craft (near the KITCHEN) to net 100,000 credits.

The MEDICAL SUPPLIES (found in a room near the hangar at **-08) are worth a fairly paltry 30,354 credits when you deposit them in the INFIRMARY on the top level of the Palyar Colony Craft.

Plonk the LARGE BOX (found in the room next to the room containing the CATERING PROVISIONS) in the PALYAR STORES (just off the hangar in the colony craft) for a measly 25 credits (!), or better still, dump it in the MECHANOID STORES (go down the right-hand corridor adjacent to the hangar in 14-15) for a more worthwhile 202,600 credits.

The ENERGY CRYSTAL should be taken from a room just off **-08 (opposite — but not immediately) to the room containing the Medical Supplies and left in the MECHANOID POWER ROOM for 450 credits, or in the PALYAR POWER ROOM for 22,450 credits.

The PALYAR ARMOURY, just off the hanger in the colony craft, is the place to drop the USEFUL ARMAMENT (found in the far right-hand of the six rooms just off the hangar at 03-04) for a 165,445 credit reward, whereas leaving it in the MECHANOID ARMOURY (quite a way off the hangar at 14-15) only nets 10,000 credits.

Just off the hangar at **-08 there's a row of eight doors — one leads to the WINCHESTER, the other seven lead to the PRISON. So which door do you take? It's the third door from the right. . . Pick up the WINCHESTER, then go to the PALYAR LABORATORY on the top level of the Colony Craft and drop it for 274,130 credits. Leaving the Winchester in the MECHANOID LABORATORY (it's near the Mechanoid Armoury) results in an extra 274,000 credits.

That's most of the saleable objects. But what of the DATABANK? And the GOLD? The NEUTRON FUEL? Ah-ha! (Bet that worried you!) These objects aren't quite so easy to obtain as before. For a start the DATABANK is found at the end ot a tricky-to-negotiate maze of rooms adjacent to the hanger at 13-08; the GOLD is in the Cheat Room (and the author's got the key), and the NEUTRON FUEL is floating at a height of 88,013 above the city — and you can only reach it in superfast craft such as the CHEESE.

Right, first things first: To get through the maze drop an object in each new room you encounter and map your progress. You should be able to find the room with the DATABANK, or at least the room containing the PASS. If you get the PASS, return to the surface and shoot all the MECHANOID-occupied locations for a cool ONE MILLION CREDITS! As for the DATABANK . . . take it to the CONTROL ROOM on the top level of the Colony Craft for a wicked 1,091,000 credits.

To get the GOLD you need to be able to get into the Cheat Room. But how can you when there doesn't seem to be a key? Well, as irony would have it, the key to this room is actually in the room itself. The SPIDER'S WEB no longer functions as a skeleton key, so basically it seems like you're up the smelly brown creek without a paddle. But wait! For some bizarre reason you can catch your own missile by flying above 150 metres, levelling out, shooting a missile, matching its speed and pressing the key to take. And if you take the missile you will find it is in fact a mutated KITCHEN SINK (used, of course, to pick up virtually any object). But that's not all! The Missile will open the door to the Cheat Room, allowing you to get the GOLD and earn a crucial FIVE MILLION CREDITS when you drop it in the EXCHEQUER on the lowest level of the Colony Craft.

Last but not least, the NEUTRON FUEL. The CHEESE can't be flown this time round — no, if you want to get about at high speeds you've got to get the TABLE from the PALYAR BRIEFING ROOM, just off the hangar at 08-01. And to get the table you need either the ANTIGRAV (found in a room two doors away from the Catering Provisions) or the MISSILE (Kitchen Sink). Once you've got the NEUTRON FUEL take it to the PALYAR ENGINE ROOM on the bottom level of

the Colony Craft for a jodson 909,000 credits. Depositing it in the MECHANOID FUEL STORES just off the hangar at 14-15 will give you 23,000 credits.

Oh yes I nearly forgot . . . grab the MECHANOID LEADER from the MECHANOID BRIEFING ROOM near the Mechanoid Laboratory and take him in the PALYAR INTERVIEW ROOM for 45,000 credits.

OTHER OBJECTS

The ANTI-TIME BOMB (used to re-assemble 'broken' structures) sits in the room to the left of the room housing the Catering Provisions.

The SIGHTS aren't overly useful, but if you really want them go to the hangar at **-08 and through the door in the corner. And while you're in this hangar, why not pop next door and collect the NOVADRIVE (mind you, it's a bit of a long and awkward route to reach it — you can't get to it by using the adjacent door).

The INTERSTELLAR CRAFT is housed in the hangar at 08-**, although you need the PASS to get down to it.

The COFFIN and the POWERAMP are at the ends of longish corridors adjacent to the hangar at 13-08, and the not-so-useful KITCHEN SINK can still be found in

CENARY
COND CITY

(surprise surprise) the KITCHEN on the bottom level of the Colony Craft.

Then there's the PHOTON EMITTER . . . which is one of the trickiest objects to get. It's stuck in a room in the Colony Craft — there's no entrance only one exit, and that's down. Go to the hangar at 03-04 and find a one-way transporter which will teleport you to this hidden room. Take the Photon Emitter and go through the door marked with the skull the cross-bones. You will now find yourself falling towards the ground, but don't wet yourself! Simply drop all objects (or better still, don't carry anything else) and press the HELP key to quit and return to safety — with a new ship AND the PHOTON EMITTER.

It must be said though, getting the Photon Emitter is a piece of cake compared to what you have to go through just to get the METAL DETECTOR and the ANTENNA. You see, as crazy as it may sound there are a couple of rooms which change the layout of the map. Rooms disappear and appear, causing no end of confusion at first. However, there are only two types of layout, so you can map them both without too much hassle. Anyroad, use the alternative map to get the METAL DETECTOR and the ANTENNA to appear. You will now find the METAL DETECTOR in the room behind the PALYAR COMMANDER'S BROTHER-IN-LAW'S ROOM, and the ANTENNA in a room on the second level of the Colony Craft — accessed via an elevator on the top level.

NOT SO TRIVIAL BITS

Beware permanently dark rooms in which the Photon Emitter has no effect. Also, watch out for traps — not all of them are marked with the skull and crossbones sign. There are quite a few prisons knocking around. Using the transporters too often can also throw you in prison.

To get through the maze of blue and green rooms (having entered the hangar at 13-08) go south, east, north, south, east, north and west. One of the transporter rooms reverses the map, *à la Mercenary,* so west becomes east and vice versa. What makes this so awkward is that unlike *Mercenary,* you HAVE to go through this transporter if you are to finish the game as there's a key to be collected. Use the position of the doors to figure out your location.

GENERAL TIPS

The mutated Kitchen Sink (the Missile) can be used to pick up objects from any distance, provided they are visible, and this includes the PALYAR COMMANDER'S BROTHER-IN-LAW'S SHIP an (extremely high velocity craft) which is also capable of reaching the Neutron Fuel. However, it can only be boarded in an underground hangar as it has a habit of shooting off when you let it go. So don't crash!

Some soopa-doopa tips to help you negotiate dark rooms (without the aid of the Photon Emitter) and rooms with invisible walls . . .

First, practice this technique in a lit room: face a wall, then turn 20 degrees. Push forward until you hit the wall and keep pushing forward so that you slide along it. Now when you come across a door it will open and you will find yourself going through it. Once you get used to using the compass to determine your direction, you can apply this trick in a dark room.

What to do when you're stuck in an orange room with no visible walls . . . Move forward until you hit a wall then drop an object. Turn 90 degrees and walk until you hit another wall. Drop an object, turn 90 degrees — and so on . . . This way you can suss out the dimensions of the room. Better still, if you drop an object as soon as you enter this type of room you will know where the exit is.

And that's just about the lot. Sorry if these tips aren't quite helpful enough, but it's better than no help at all. Should you discover something of great importance or interest on your travels, don't hesitate to drop me a line. In fact, if you've got any remotely useful Amiga tips lying around gathering dust, chuck 'em my way — they may be worth printing, and they could save someone's life . . .

IMPACT
(Audiogenic)

Some codes . . .

LEVEL	CODE
11	GOLD
21	FISH
31	WALL
41	PLUS
51	HEAD
61	JUMP
71	ROAD
81	USER

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN
(Mirrorsoft)

As soon as the words 'Defender Of The Crown' appear on the brick backdrop, press K until the game is loaded. Now when you play you should have 2048 knights. Thanks to Stephen Wong of Brisbane, Queensland in Australia for that little gem.

play TO WiN

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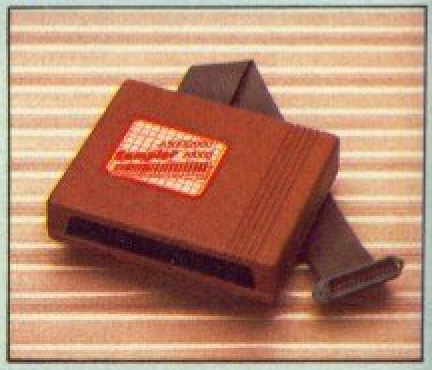
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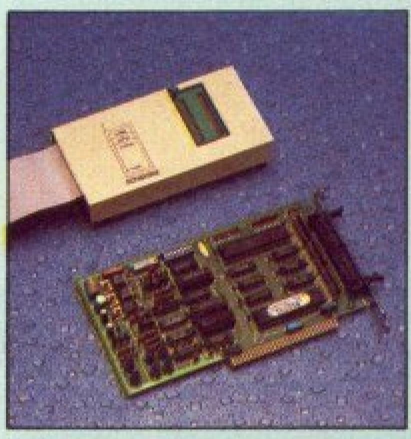
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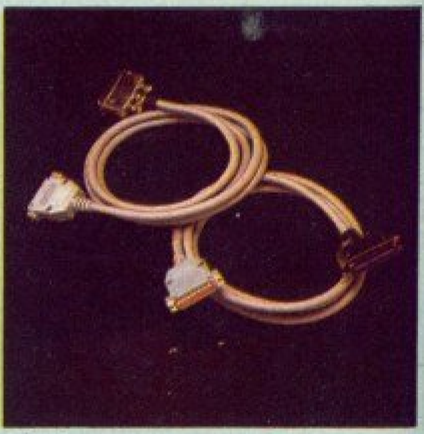
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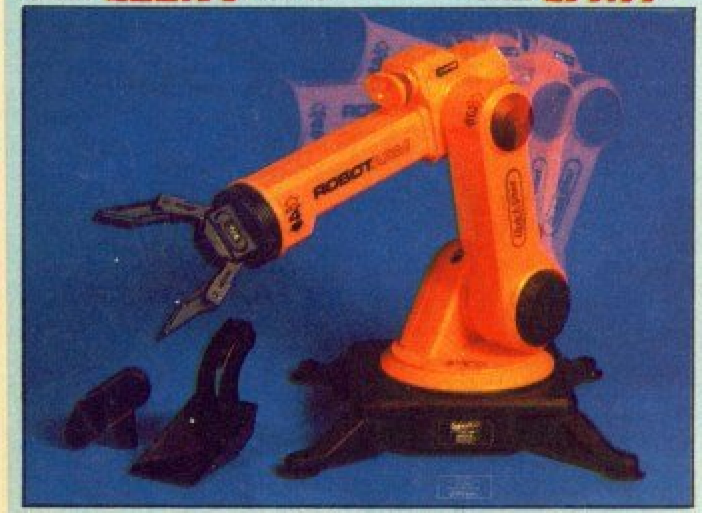
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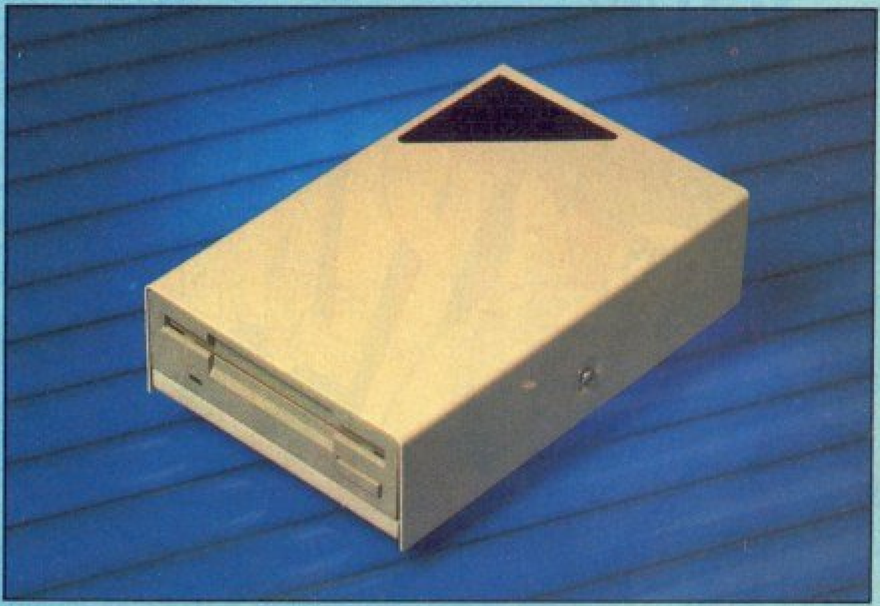
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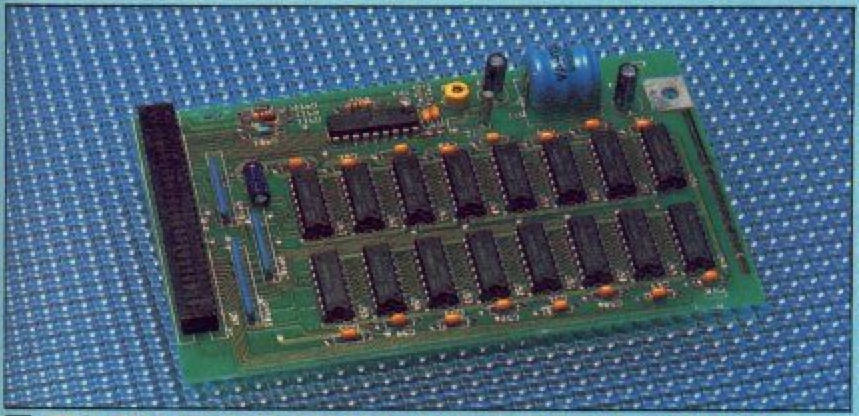
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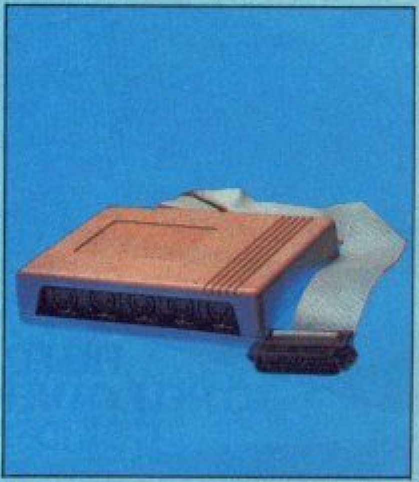


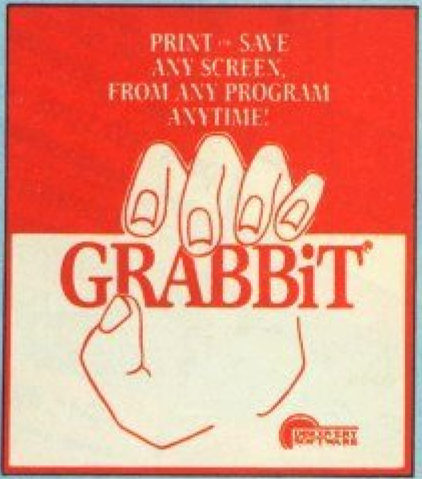


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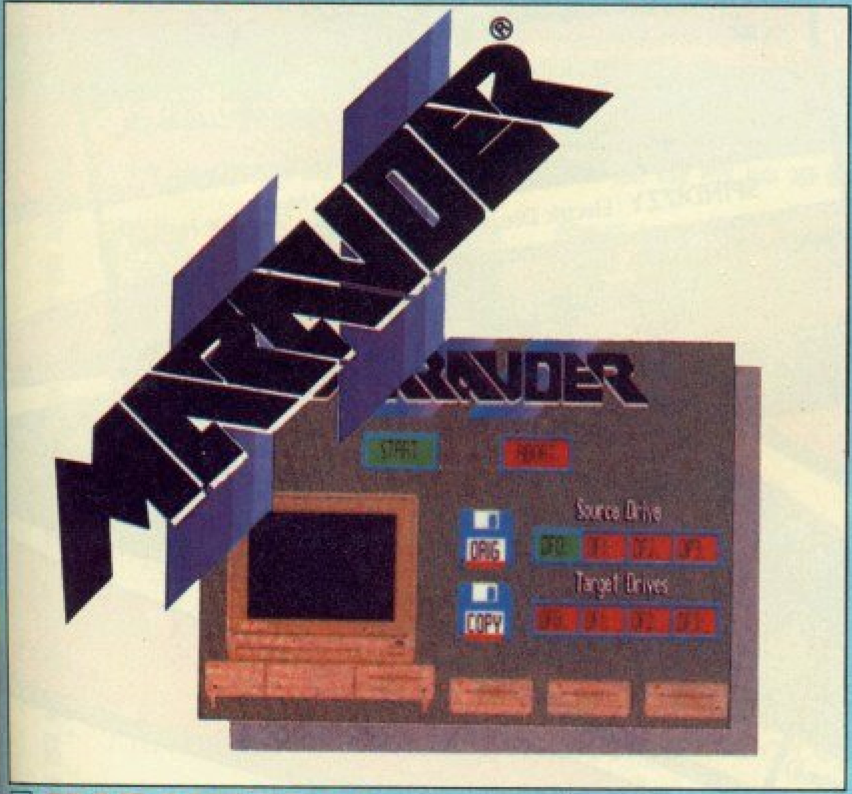
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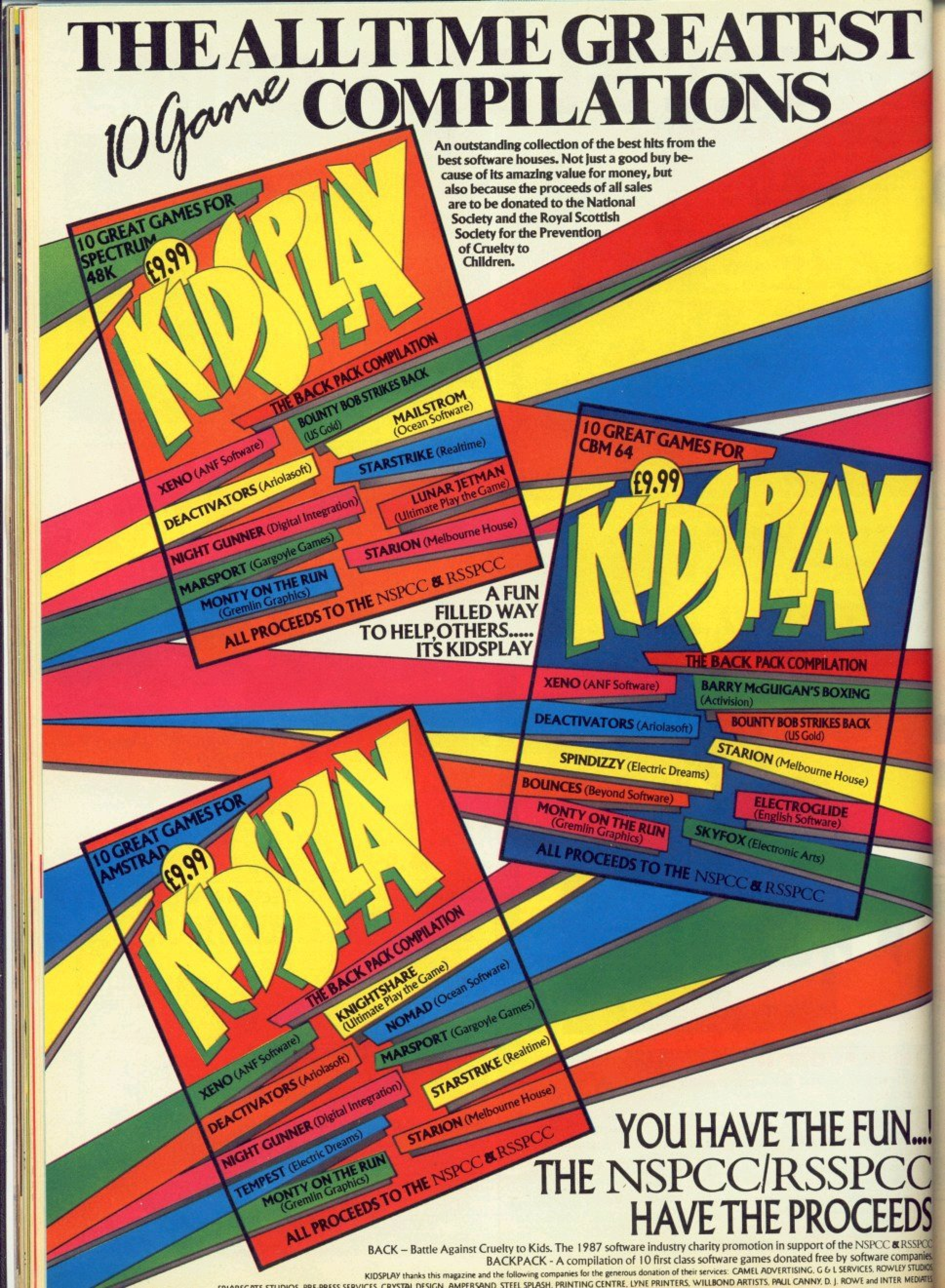
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ROADWARS

64/128 Melbourne House

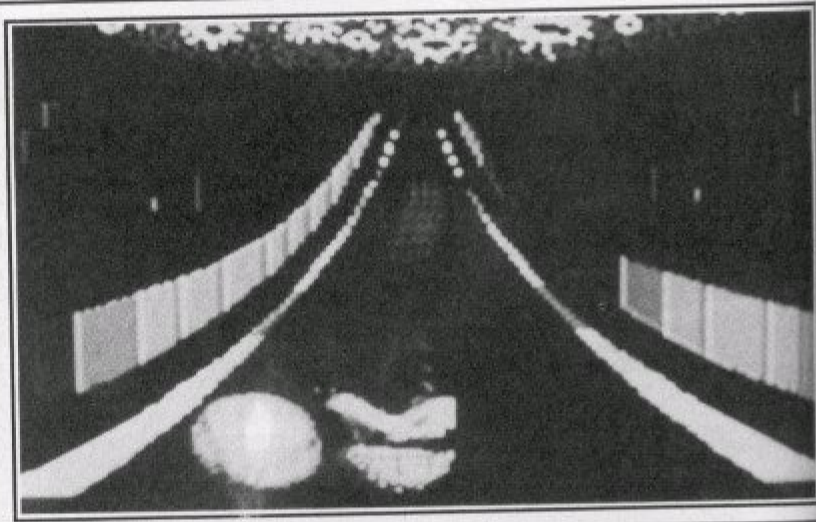
Price: £9.95/ cass £14.95/disk

Had I been playing *Roadwars* on the Amiga or ST, I'd probably have spent the last few hours enjoying myself. As it is, I'm lumbered with the 64 version which is about as exciting as using one of those new Remington fluff removers. The instructions leaflet (for the game, I mean) gives it all away. By thoughtfully including game descriptions for the 16-bit machines, it spells out exactly what us lo-tech zappers are missing out on — quite a lot it seems.

Anyway *Roadwars* is a conversion of an arcade game which (I must admit) I have never graced with any money. The object of the game is simple, you must clear the road of obstacles. This can be done in one or two-player mode. According to the instructions, it's wise to co-operate with your partner to get as far as possible up the road. If you're by yourself the computer takes over the other battlesphere and, from what I can see, is precious little use.

The obstacles consist mainly of red balls rolling headlong towards you at considerable speed and veering slightly from side to side. These can be zapped but if they hit you, your protective shield goes down; a few more like that and the game's over. Chevrons in the road have the same effect. But if you run over an arrow pointing towards you in the road, you're rewarded with extra firepower. On later levels, the odd satellite comes floating along and tries to blast you with a laser gun. That's it for the road. You might have expected a few more spectacular hazards, not least a few holes — zero marks for imagination.

Down both sides of the road are brown coloured barriers. These supposedly stop you from falling off the sides of the road. But the odd blue barrier sometimes comes past, which emits nasty sparks right across the road. These must be



Roadwars: rolling stones . . .

zapped. But be careful not to zap the brown ones or you'll create huge gaps that will make it easier for you to fall off. You move onto the next level when you've cleared the road of blue barriers.

You and your partner control what the instructions call battlespheres. These can shoot straight ahead (at the red balls) and to either side (to zap the blue barriers). Pushing the joystick button forward or back opens and closes the shield. With the shield down, your battlesphere looks rather like a beachball spinning along. With the shields down, the sphere stops spinning and hovers along with the guns showing. In terms of movement, you're confined to right and left.

There were a few things that impressed me about this game and

LEE ENFI

What an extraordinarily good title, what nice screen shots on the inlay, what an amazingly crappy game. From time to time a piece of software explodes onto the scene and causes little less than a ripple, and this is just such a one.

Lee Enfield is the second in the *Time Trouble* series and has Lee running amok in the Thirteenth Century castle of Count Savoy trying to rescue the Holy Shroud before old Saveloy destroys it. But Lee soon discovers he has been led into a fiendish trap.

To start with the playing area takes up a mere quarter of the screen. The rest of the display shows two rather glum looking people staring on at Lee's effort to rescue the shroud.

The graphics in that quarter screen playing area would be slated on Spectrum let alone the 64. Lee Enfield looks like a large blue block, with two white sticks for arms. The rooms are yellow and do wonders to disguise Lee from your view. Oh my God! Lee's under attack, but what is it? Something so hideously amazing it defies reason? More like something freshly sneezed actually. A large green and black mesh of blocks jumps up and down as if it's just had it's goolies sliced off. To fight this ill defined critter waggle the joystick a bit. Lee's arms (well sticks) will go absolutely crazy. At this point two bars appear either side of the screen representing Lee's strength and current health.

Displaying our hero's status in the combat round seems a fruitless action as both bars just jump around wildly and distract you from the combat by making you wonder just what they're supposed to be representing.

The whole point of the game seems to revolve around the fact that the games player finds immense fun in opening the various wardrobes and boxes scattered around the castle whilst under constant attack from roaming blobs. When one of the boxes is opened another mass of blocks appears in the corner of the game screen, this usually vaguely resembles a scroll. What purpose this serves I don't know, but it's there.

After a few more locations and a few more battles it will not take the world's smartest person to deduce that nothing more is going to happen.

Sadly there is absolutely nothing nice I can say about *Lee Enfield*. It's a complete waste of money. In case there is anybody who does like this excuse for a game Lee Enfield stars in two other pieces, *Space Ace* and *An Amazon Adventure* (sure gets around doesn't he?)

Mark Patterson

LEE ENFIELD	DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY (1–10)
VIDEO	1
AUDIO	4
TOUGHNESS	4
ENDURANCE	1
VFM	1
CU RATING	**1**

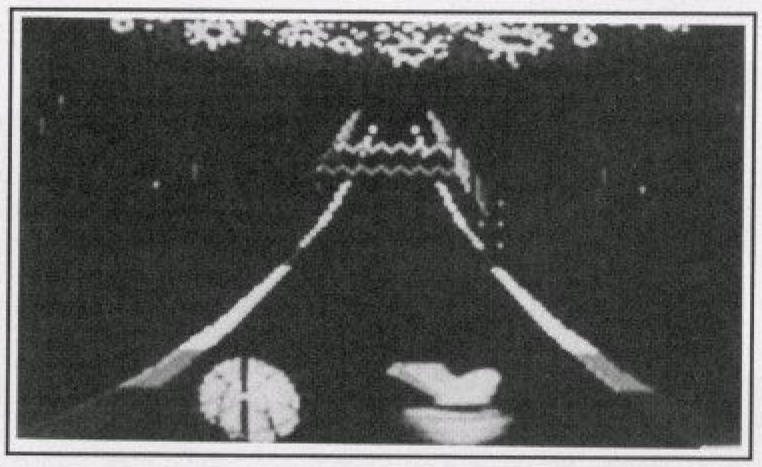


lots that didn't. For a start, the battlespheres are graphically well done, and the music and sound effects are above average.

But on the naff side, there's no real gameplay, there's precious little skill involved and the animation of the road and barriers is pretty basic. A few bends in the road might have relieved the tedium of simply watching it come at you headlong.

What makes it worse is reading the gameplay for the Amiga and ST versions. Where are the bonus roads every four levels, the gateways, the aliens living inside panels, red balls mutating into missiles, orbiters that hover round your craft and give extra firepower? It all reads like a totally different game. I reckon Melbourne House have skimped on the 64 version. Definitely not for me, this one.

Bohdan Buciak



. . . *gather not very high marks!*

ROADWARS — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

VIDEO
AUDIO
TOUGHNESS
ENDURANCE
VFM

CU RATING **4**

ELD

64/128
Infogrames
Price: £9.99/cass
£14.99/disk



Wot – no cowboys??

NORTH STAR

64/128
Gremlin
Price:
£9.99/cass
£14.99/disk

"Le project North Star, l'operation classe la plus haute." What? Oh, wrong instructions. The North Star project, the most highly classified operation ever to be undertaken by the four Earth Lords has gone tragically wrong. Too much birth and not enough death has resulted in the Earth becoming over-populated and famine ridden.

As a short term solution a gigantic space station capable of supporting thousands of people has been built in the orbit of our humble planet. For years transport shuttles were ferrying tons of equipment up to the construction site. Then one day shortly before the station was completed, one of the shuttles failed to return. To investigate this the wise lords send someone up to nose around. As it happens the station has fallen under the control of an alien menace. Surprise!

When that person arrives (who turns out to be you) he gets rather a nasty shock, the life support systems have been shut down but thanks to some rather hi-tec robot implants you can survive. Your mission is simple, terminate all the aliens and restart the life support systems by reaching the central control room at the heart of the space station.

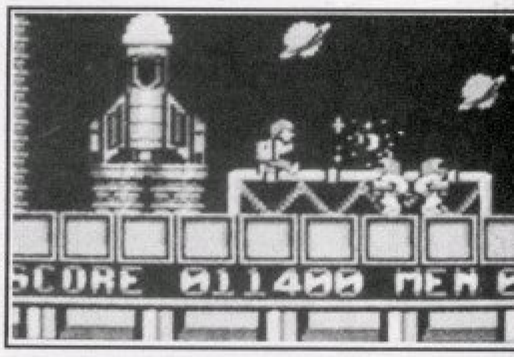
Initially your only weapon is an extendable bionic arm which can be used to destroy the alien aggressors. Five other weapons can be collected on your jaunt, four of them are of the obvious kind, the fifth being a smart bomb. As well as the weapons, extra oxygen must be collected in order to survive.

A nice fat bonus is given at the end of a level, calculated by the amount of oxygen you have left. Then it's time for a quick ride in a lift to get to the second level which is like the first except the backdrop is black. Without getting any further into the game it became painfully obvious that the gameplay was going to be the same throughout the game.

The graphics on the backdrops are poor, bland, and generally uninteresting. The aliens appear as suited humans or bouncing half-egg shells. Soundwise nothing much is produced except spot effects and they're none too good.

This game failed to grab me anywhere — let alone where it hurts. *North Star* just left me wanting to leave the space station in alien hands and go and do something really interesting, like going for the world cracker eating record.

Mark Patterson



Call *those aliens??*

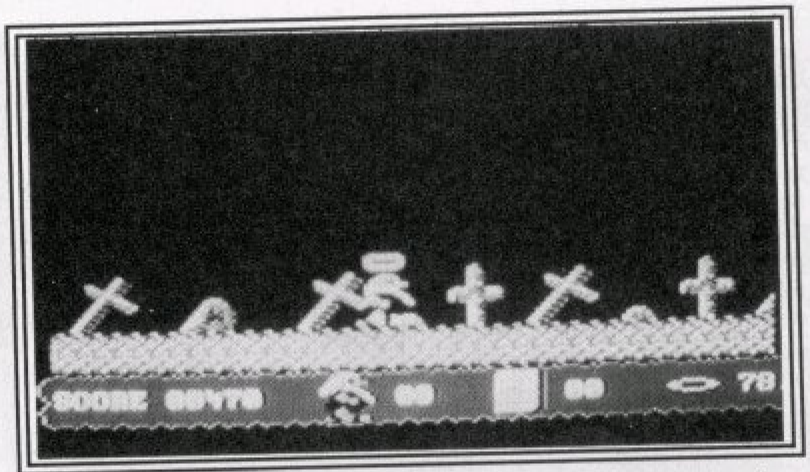
NORTHSTAR — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

VIDEO
AUDIO
TOUGHNESS
ENDURANCE
VFM

CU RATING **4**

To HELL and BACK



64/128
CRL
Price:
£9.95/cass
£14.95/disk

To Hell and Back is a game that puts you in charge of a power-assisted saint's halo. There are bibles to pick up for extra strength and the tablets of the Ten Commandments to be found. This is either a game of great religious devotion or boys at CRL are pushing their luck when Judgement Day comes around.

Having crossed myself three times, put on my heavy-duty roasary beads and fasted for three days, I'll tell you what it's about. You are Angel Gabriel. Your quest is to find the ten tablets of the Ten Commandments which, when found, will lead you down to Hell. Why you should want to go to Hell is a theological problem CRL have decided not to confront.

The game has 10 levels, each, when completed, awarding you with a tablet. But before you can reach the end of a level, you must fight off loads of meanies and jump across lots of gaps and chasms. It's all very much like *Ghosts 'n' Goblins.*

Your only weapon, as I was saying, is the halo hovering above your head. Press the firebutton, and it suddenly shoots out in front, zapping whatever is in its way before coming back to rest above your head — the Pope would be green with envy. Anyway, despite being an angel, Gabriel can't fly. He manages only to walk and jump. Perhaps he sacrificed his wings for the killer halo.

Now for the nasties. The easiest ones to kill are the hooded ghost-like figures that materialise out of the ground and walk around. These will lose you a point of energy if they bump into you. Occasionally they'll leave behind a bible when zapped. Pick these up for extra energy points.

Trickier are the flying bats that swoop up and down at the point where you must jump over a gap. Nastiest of all are the swooping ghoulies. They fly up and down and from left to right. Being hit by one of these knocks you either forward or back.

This usually happens when you're about to jump over a gap, thus knocking you off into the fires below and losing you one of your five lives.

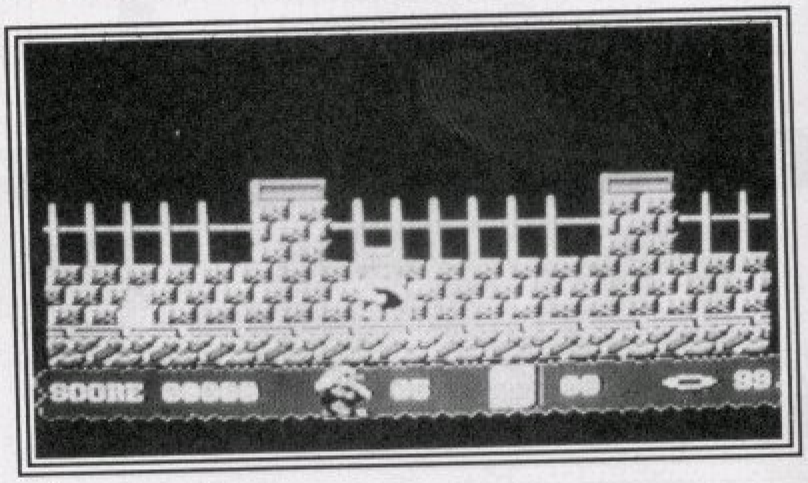
When you do make it to the end of a level, you confront a large beast which must be shot repeatedly before it's destroyed and relinquishes one of the ten tablets. Then it's on to the next level and more of the same.

Although there's not much tax the brain, the game is very difficult to play, because controlling Gabriel takes some time to master. The problem is making him jump. Push the joystick a fraction too long and he jumps twice, usually finishing up floating through a gap down into the flames (a neat touch is that the halo floats down after him).

Add that to the ghoulies pushing you back and forth whenever they hit you, and you've got a game that scores high on frustration. Had it not been for my rosary beads I might have uttered a few choice words.

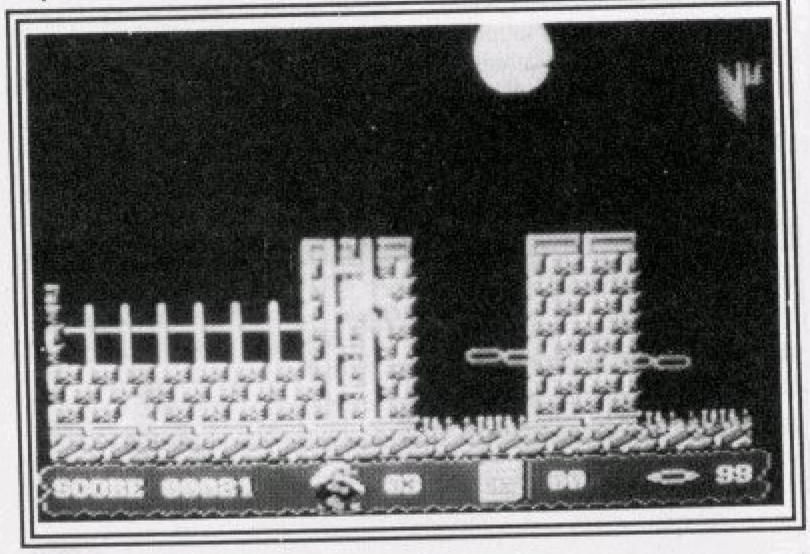
Reasonable graphics good, music and tough gameplay make this a good and competent game, but I think you're going to get bored after a while. Once you've grappled with the large beast and got a tablet or two, why bother with the rest?.

St. Bohdan of Buciak



▲ ***A damned annoying game.***

▼ ***A binary beelzebub.***



TO HELL AND BACK — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Video
Audio
Toughness
Endurance
VFM

CU RATING

6

CHEAPO ROUND-UP

WHEELIES
Micro Selection

What a dreary piece of software this is and no mistake. Guide the sickeningly cute Eugene (*I don't remember him like that — Ed*) or Tarkus through seven horizontally scrolling levels, negotiating the maze-like terrain, avoiding or destroying cute nasties and collecting fellow Wheelies to complete the game. If it wasn't so slow and uninteresting and it didn't resemble a mediocre *Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit* creation, *Wheelies* would be a neat little game. But it is and it does and it most certainly isn't. **(3)**

TANGENT
Micro Selection

This horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up has been lying around for some time but has only just seen the light of day, courtesy of The Edge's budget label. Why? Well it's easy to see when you play it. Despite many neat bits, such as great graphics, pretty sexy parallax scrolling and mean mutha ships, *Tangent* offers little more than a ho-hum run-of-the-mill blast. That said, you can do much worse for three quid. So don't, get this instead. **(6)**

OSMIUM
Power House

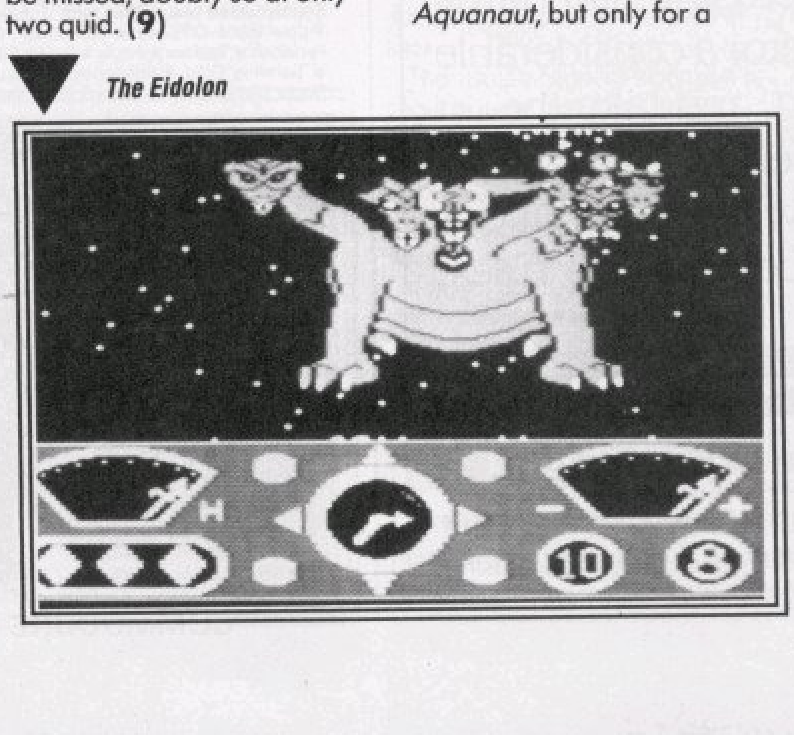
Hoo hoo hoo, a-ha a-ha… ah. I like this game. It's funny. The fact that it's an extremely poor *Delta* rip-off makes it even more chucklesome. Yes, *Osmium* is a horizontally scrolling progressive shoot 'em up. Actually, make that *regressive*. As you fly over the instantly forgettable landscapes, shooting the silly aliens and collecting extra weapons via *Delta*-esque icons, the screen wobbles up and down. What a laugh.

Also vaguely amusing (giggle) is the fact that the bullets always disappear about two-thirds of the way across the screen, regardless of your horizontal position. Haha. Oh dear, oh dear. Stop it. Stop it. No no. Whooooo ha ha ha. Ahem. No, *Osmium* isn't a good game. But it's the best laugh I've had in a long while. Don't miss it. **(6)**

THE EIDOLON
Ricochet

Of the four Lucasfilm titles released by Activision two years ago, *The Eidolon* was arguably the best. And what a re-release it makes, too! Trapped in the labyrinthine corridors of your own mind the prime objective is escape. Make your way through eight levels, collecting crystals and battling strange creatures, including flying fish, nasty hell-hounds and huge dragons, to confront the ultimate evil — an enormous seven-headed dragon. Brilliantly atmospheric graphics and sound make *The Eidolon* an experience not to be missed, doubly so at only two quid. **(9)**

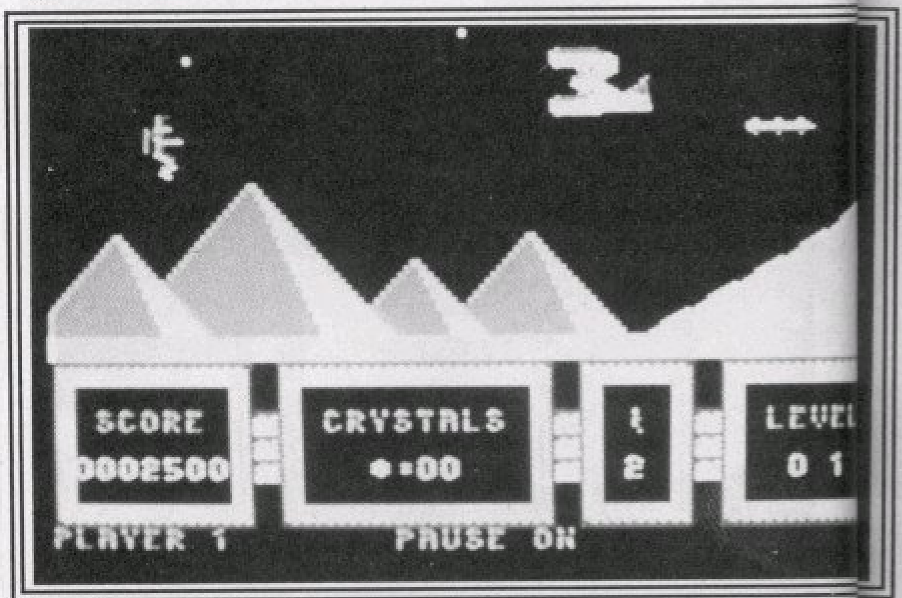
The Eidolon



AQUANAUT
Power House

No, it's not another re-release of Interceptor's ageing underwater exploration game of the same name. Power House's *Aquanaut* is a slightly different kettle of fish (ow). Taking control of a submarine (any similarity to the sub in Stingray is entirely intentional) it's up to you to cleanse (ooh) the seas of alien pollution. Cor! Maybe not — it turns out to be yet another horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up, and a slow, jerky, flickery one at that. Don't expect to see this one bubbling under… And if you want a whale of a time, fish elsewhere. **(2)**

Destruct



DESTRUCT
Power House

Ker-rikey. Another horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up from The Power House. Another rather poo-er horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up from the Power House, actually. *Destruct* is undoubtedly the worst of the bunch. It's funnier than *Aquanaut*, but only for a couple of minutes. Smirk at the silly sound effects. Titter when the guy you control's head falls off. Chuckle at the God-awful graphics. Then groan when you realise the joke's on you for bothering to splash out two quid on this junk. Sorry, Power House. But decent quality budget software this ain't. **(1)**

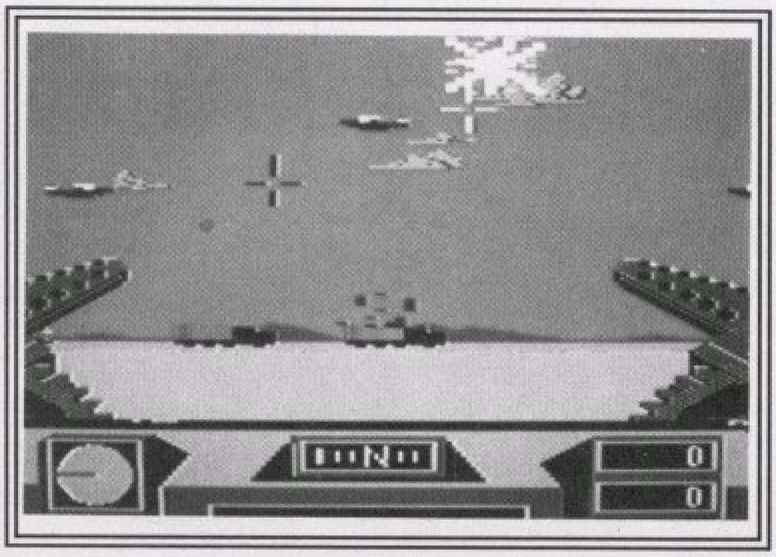
THE MICRO ZONE
Compass Software

Who are Compass Software? And more importantly, what is *The Micro Zone*? Well, it's simple. This is one of those home grown jobbies — jobbies being the operative word. Sorry Compass, but this *SUECK*-produced shoot 'em up lacks gameplay. And worse still, what it lacks in gameplay is more than adequately compensated with too many bullets. Run up the garden, shooting insects and die a lot. Not exactly a barrel of laughs. The address? Erm, we lost it. Maybe it's just as well… **(1)**

BALLBLAZER
Richochet

The second of the two Lucasfilm re-releases this month is the vastly underrated and overlooked sport of the future, *Ballblazer*. It's basically a futuristic football and the atmospheric, high-speed action takes place on a large chequered pitch with moving goalposts at either end. The objective is to score goals, although this is easier said than done. Instead of players you control a Rotofoil, and for simplicity's sake, forces play a

major part in the game. That's really all there is to say, except that it's fast, furious and fun, and worth a flutter at two quid. **(9)**



Desert Fox

DESERT FOX
Power House

Sydney Developments' *Beach Head*-style blend of arcade action went down rather well when first released over two years ago by US Gold, and quite rightly so. There's plenty of Boche to bash and WWII-type objects to wipe out, plus a bit of strategy and some brill digitised speech — all from the comfort of your cosy tank on your mission to erradicate Rommel and his forces. One of The Power House's more impressive releases — even if it is a *re*-release. **(8)**

ARAC
Prism

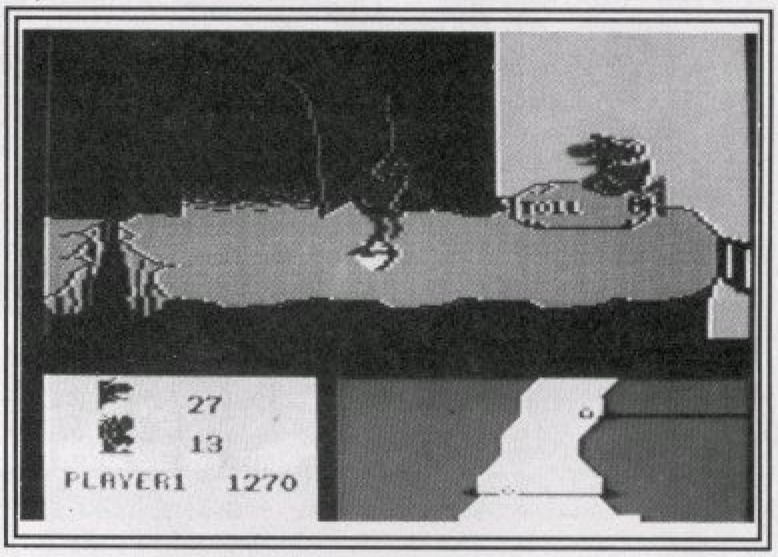
Paul O'Malley's nose —erm, arcade adventure — first appeared on the Addictive lable almost two years ago and was met with a healthy reception. Unsurprising, as it's rather good. *Arac* is a droid who has to be guided round a large nos... ahem, flick-screen maze of greenery, in an attempt to capture the many unusual creatures. Once caught they can be used to help Arac complete the game — an effective and original touch. Good gameplay combined with pretty graphics and virtually no sound make *Arac* a serious contender for re-release of the month. No(se) problem. **(9)**

GROG'S REVENGE
Powerhouse

This is a prehistoric re-release based on a caveman's antic's and is a CU Golden Oldie. A sequel to the even older Sydney game *BC's Quest For Tires* it features a stunningly silly game and some of the best cartoon graphics to appear on the 64.

Control Grog, a caveman on a unicycle, on his trips around numerous mountain paths collecting... erm, clams. Well we did say it was silly. It's also good fun, with hazards like rocks and boulders, a snot monster and a bad tempered geezer who shouts so loud that poor old Grog flies off his bike in fright. Another candidate for re-release of the month. If you missed out first time round, snap this up... **(8)**

Grog's Revenge



ACE
Cascade

Not so much a flight simulation with some combat thrown in for good measure, but more of an aerial combat simulation with flight simulator overtones. *ACE* sold gazillions when released at full price, and is no doubt going to sell lots more at a budget price. There's bits of simulation, plenty of blasting and a decent feeling of flight generated. What's more there's some missions to keep you busy once you get used to flying around. There are better simulations available, but none at this price, so why not give it a whirl? **(8)**

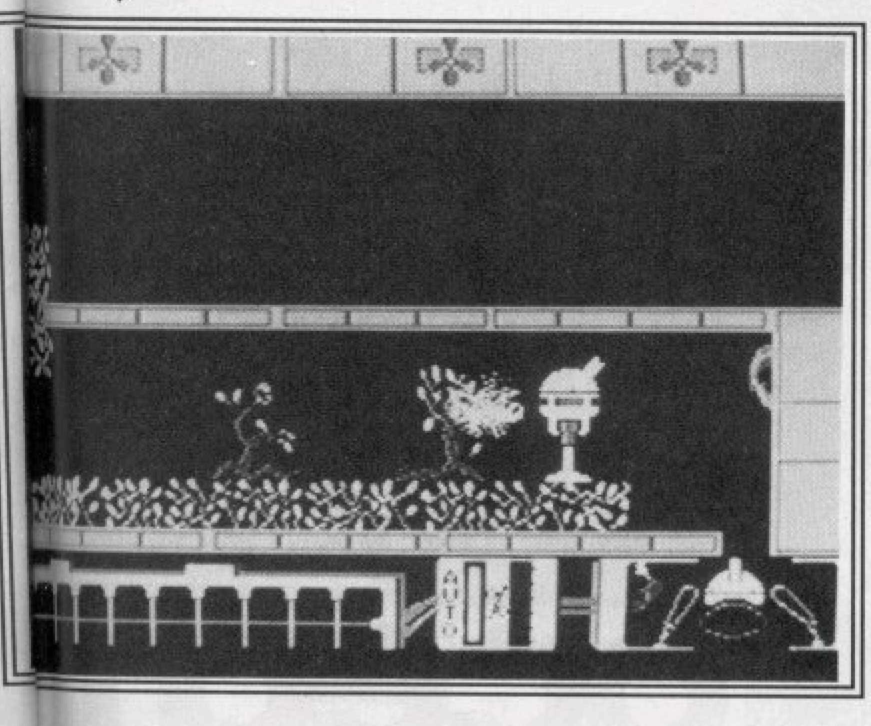
BRUCE LEE
(Americana)

Wowza, what a bargain. This 20-screen platform game-cum-beat-'em-up-cum-arcade-adventure featuring the man himself, Bluce Ree, was generally regarded as pretty damn good when released over three years ago. Now? Well, it's dated, sure, but it's as playable as ever and not to be missed. Take control of Bluce himself and run around beating up ninjas and the like in an attempt to penetrate the evil wizard's stronghold. Crude graphics, ploppy sound but bags of fun to be had for your Yen. **(8)**

BOGIE'S PICK
(Top Ten)

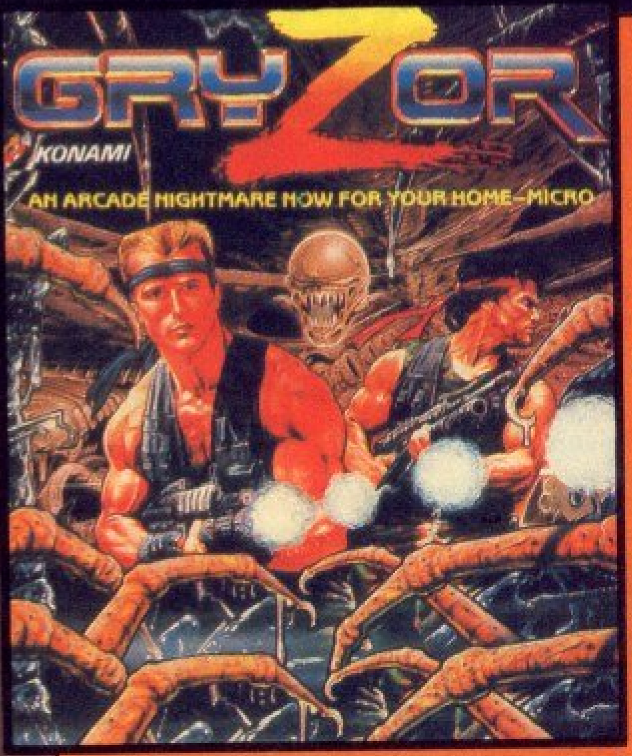
The best thing about this complilation from sweety giants Maynard's Top Ten offshoot is the reference to nasal excavation in the title. **(2)**

Arac



CHEAPO ROUND-UP

SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE







The coin-op smash hit from Konami now for your home-micro. This fantastic conversion with all the original play features takes you into a thrilling alien world . . . . . negotiate force fields and take on fanatical guerillas as you infiltrate their headquarters.

Split second timing and nerves of steel are a must for this fun packed program where addiction will always bring you back for more!

GRYZOR

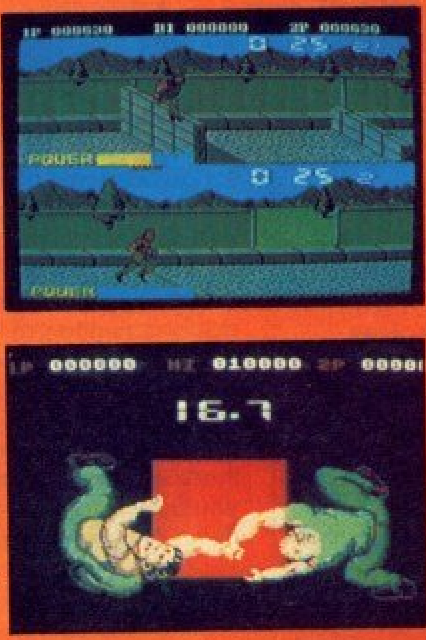
WORLDS APART,

Survive to become a captain through the toughest training academy. Konami's arcade blockbuster has already reached No 1 in the Gallup charts with this superb conversion for your home-micro.

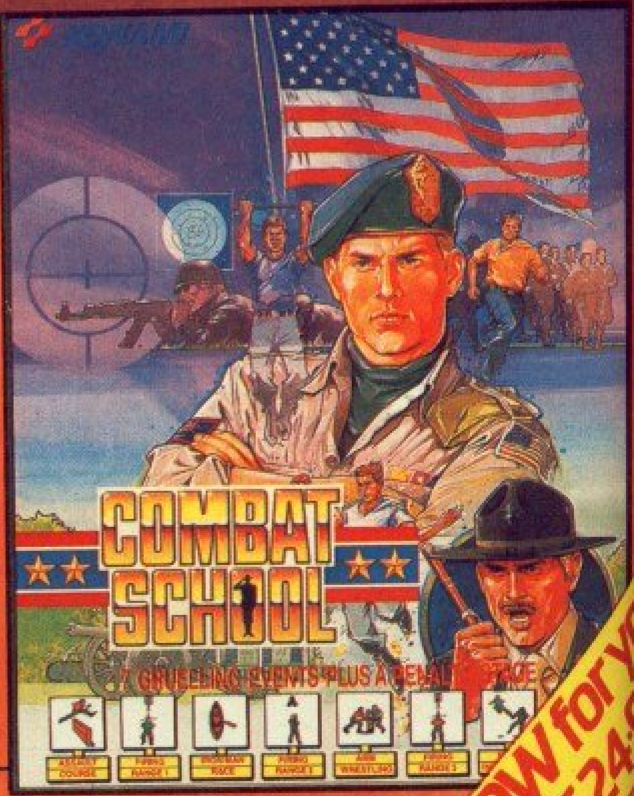
Featuring all the game-play of the arcade original, Combat School offers a real challenge to the toughest thoroughbred gamester.

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you're out!



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BOB WINNER

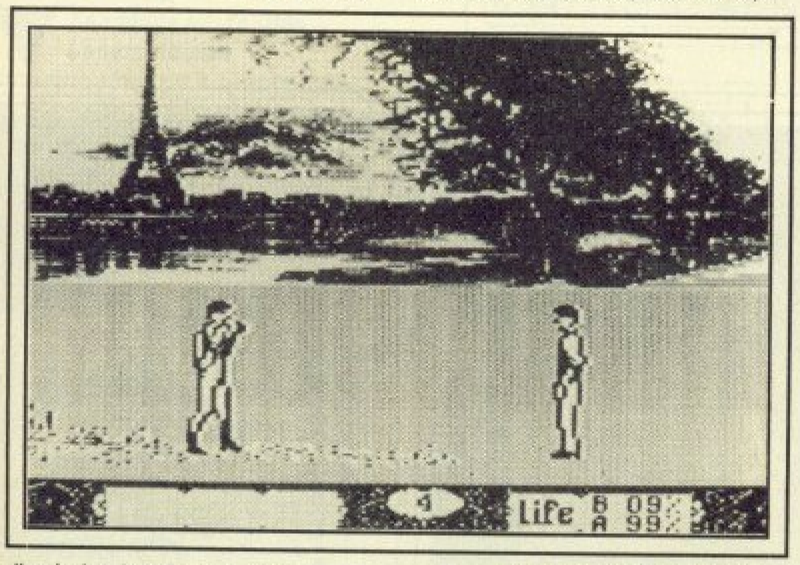
64/128
Loriciels/ Elite
Price: £9.99 cass £14.99 disk

Loriciels UK have 14 titles lined up for us this year, and if *Bob Winner* is anything to go by, then 1989 can't come too soon.

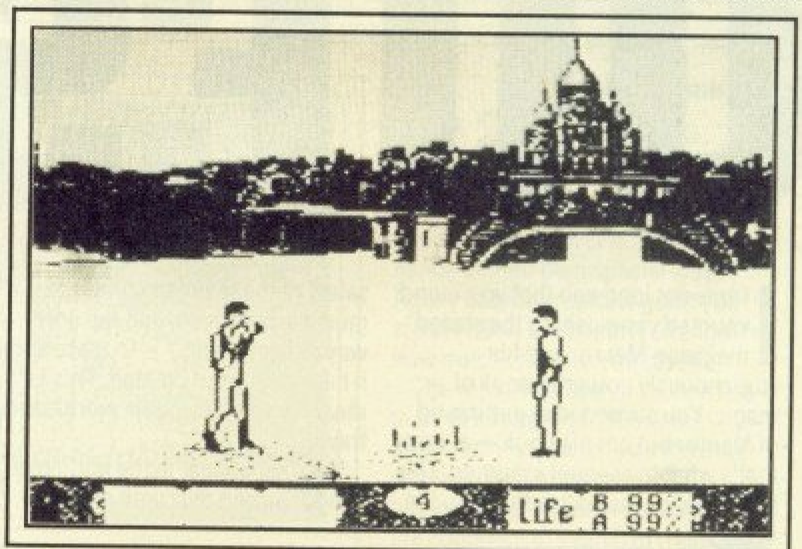
Everything about this game, from the misleading on-screen prompts to the shoddy animation, is sloppy and second-rate. If this is representative of France's number one software house then the French software market must be even less discriminating than our own.

Loading the cassette is a thankless task guaranteed to annoy the most patient user. Frequent prompting to 'press Play and Return' is suddenly followed by the command to 'Return and rewind the tape'. This will get you absolutely nowhere, until you realise that 'return' means *turn over* the tape. In other words, load in Side B (or, as the French put it, Face B). Doesn't anyone *test* these things?

Included in the package is a silly cartoon book which does its best to convince us that there actually is a plot to the game. There isn't, and it soon becomes obvious that *Bob Winner* is nothing more than a mediocre combat sim which throws together savate (French kick fighting), boxing and wild west gunfights. The programmers have added some digitised cosmopolitan scenery — like *International Karate*, but not as good — together with a few rolling barrels and killer wasps, in a desperate attempt to liven up what is a crushingly dull game.



Bob prepares to dish out an eyeful.



Poremup!

Play begins in Paris, and it's not long before Bob's being menaced by 'the little Frenchman with his arrogant moustache' who's just begging to be kicked in the Champs-Elysees. Before he can do that, however, Bob's got to sneak past him and brave the dangers of the desert which has mysteriously encroached upon the French capital. After a few minutes dodging the flying knives, bullets and other hazards which appear from nowhere, and leaping over the quicksand, Bob is suddenly hit on the head by a falling boot.

This is exactly what he's been waiting for, and thus armed he can now retrace his steps to knock the stuffing out of ze leetle Frenchman. Pressing the space bar throws Bob into combat mode, as well as making him look identical to his opponent (for no good reason that I can think of). Once the Frenchman is dead — a few kicks to the head should do the trick — Bob's got to march into the next screen (no scrolling round here, squire!) and do the whole thing all over again. Same fighter, same moves.

Only when the second arrogant moustache bites the dust can Bob pick up the key and exit, via the desert quicksands, on to the next level. This time it's London (Big Ben, British Museum, Tower Bridge), the fighters are boxers, and Bob's got to stroll around the desert once more until — you guessed it — a boxing glove drops on his bonce.

After beating up the boxer (twice) there's the third and final level — a gunfight set, inexplicably, in New York — and Bob can at last reach the temple (?) and discover its secret. I bet you just can't wait.

Compared to other combat simulations with the same price tag, such as System 3's *Last Ninja* and *Bangkok Knights*, the drab scenery, comical animation and ludicrous gameplay of *Bob Winner* are laughable. Nor are its inadequacies redeemed by challenging fight sequences; Bob's nine lives should be more than sufficient for anyone who's adept at this kind of thing.

One final gripe: the back-cover blurb describes this farrago of a game as 'brilliant', boasting of 'a new generation of graphics' and 'lots and lots of music'. Even allowing for the usual exaggeration this is going too far, especially as the only music seems to be that accompanying the title screen.

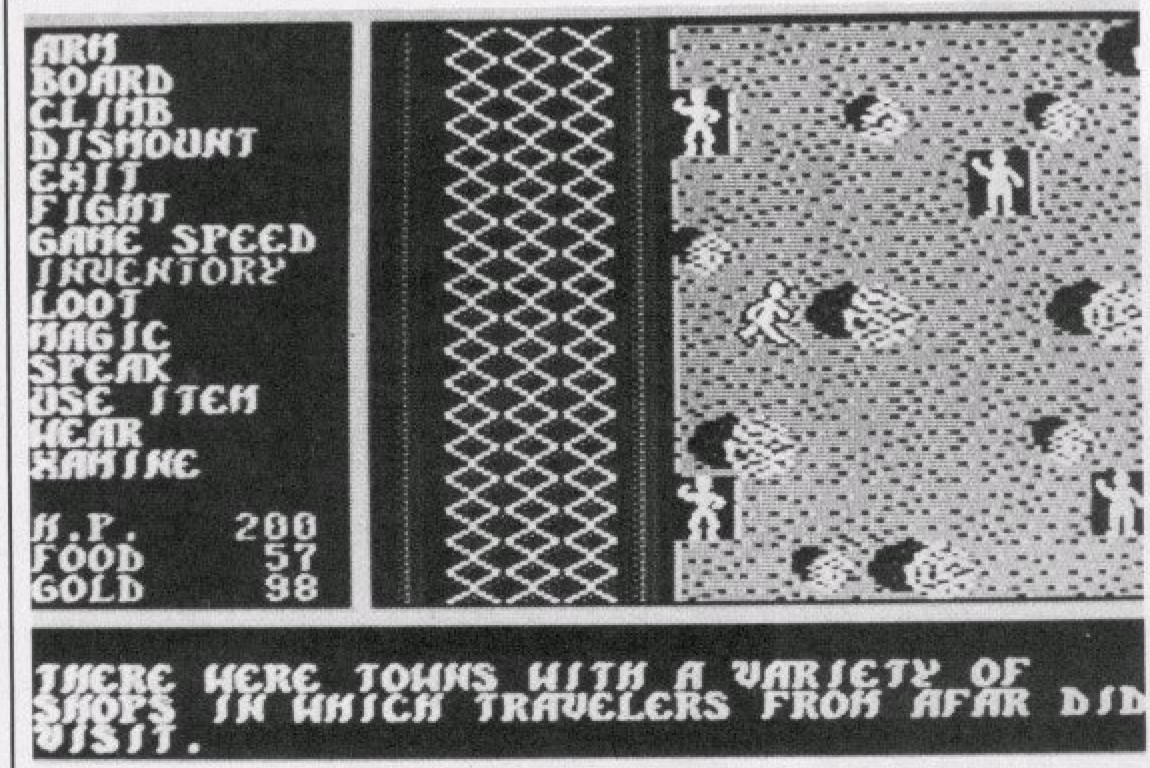
If ever a game was clearly destined for instant oblivion, then this is it.

Bill Scolding

BOB WINNER — DIGITAL POINTS DISPLAY

	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Video	4
Audio	2
Toughness	2
Endurance	1
VFM	1

CU RATING
2



In the middle of the matchstick men.

QUESTRON

It was not long ago that you found yourself vanquishing the crazed magician Mantor and his stupendously powerful book of magic. You suceeded in getting rid of Mantor but not his book — at least that's what the sequel assumes. This book now poses such a threat to the safety of the realm of Landor that it must be destroyed, and the only way of destroying it is to make sure it has never been created. This means a spot of ye olde worlde time travel.

You first appear in the middle of Landor armed only with a dagger, and two hundred gold pieces to do with as you please. You also have two hundred and fifty hit (health) points, though these don't last very long. Apart from your main objective you have no idea what to do next. Information can be gleaned from the locals at the right price.

Sometimes this might be something hideously obvious that you've worked out already, but more often than not it can be very useful. For example, you're told to go to the Hall of Visions in the castle, and to open it with the gold key. Do this and you get more than a helpful hint on what to do next.

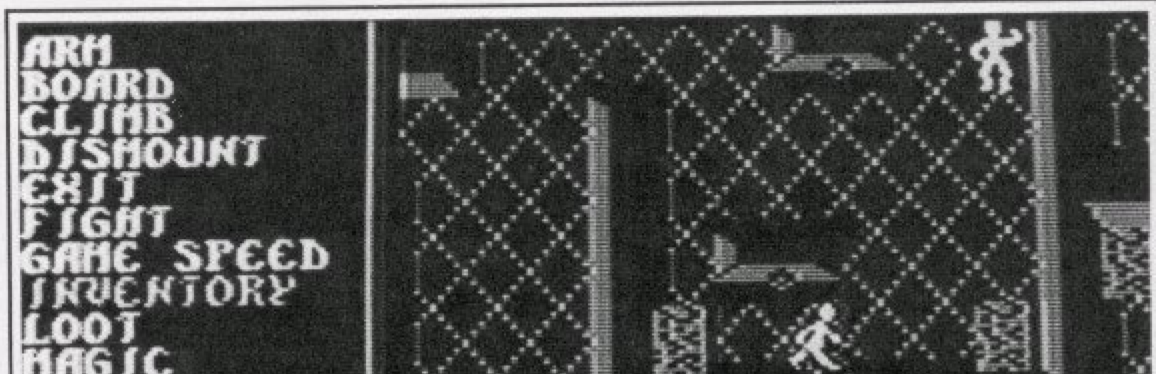
The game is set over two realms, Landor and the Land of Sorcerers, as well as having dungeons and tombs dotted around the landscape. For the best part the graphics are pretty mangey, the landscape is sparsely detailed, and on occasions a tiny sprite will pop up and start beating hell out of you.

64/128

SSI

Price: £14.95 disk only

Find the Hall Of Visions.





The character you play can be controlled by keyboard input where, apart from the directions, pressing the first letter of an option will activate it. By holding down the fire button for more than two seconds you obtain access to a menu system.

In the first part of the game you have to complete several minor tasks, I wish I could tell you what they are but that would take most of the fun out of the game. But what puzzles there are involve the intricate skill of being able to find things in huge mazes. Skill is required in being able to determine the best way of destroying an enemy (magic, hand-to-hand, or run). Some of the opposition are right stonkers and sting you for three-hundred hit points a go.

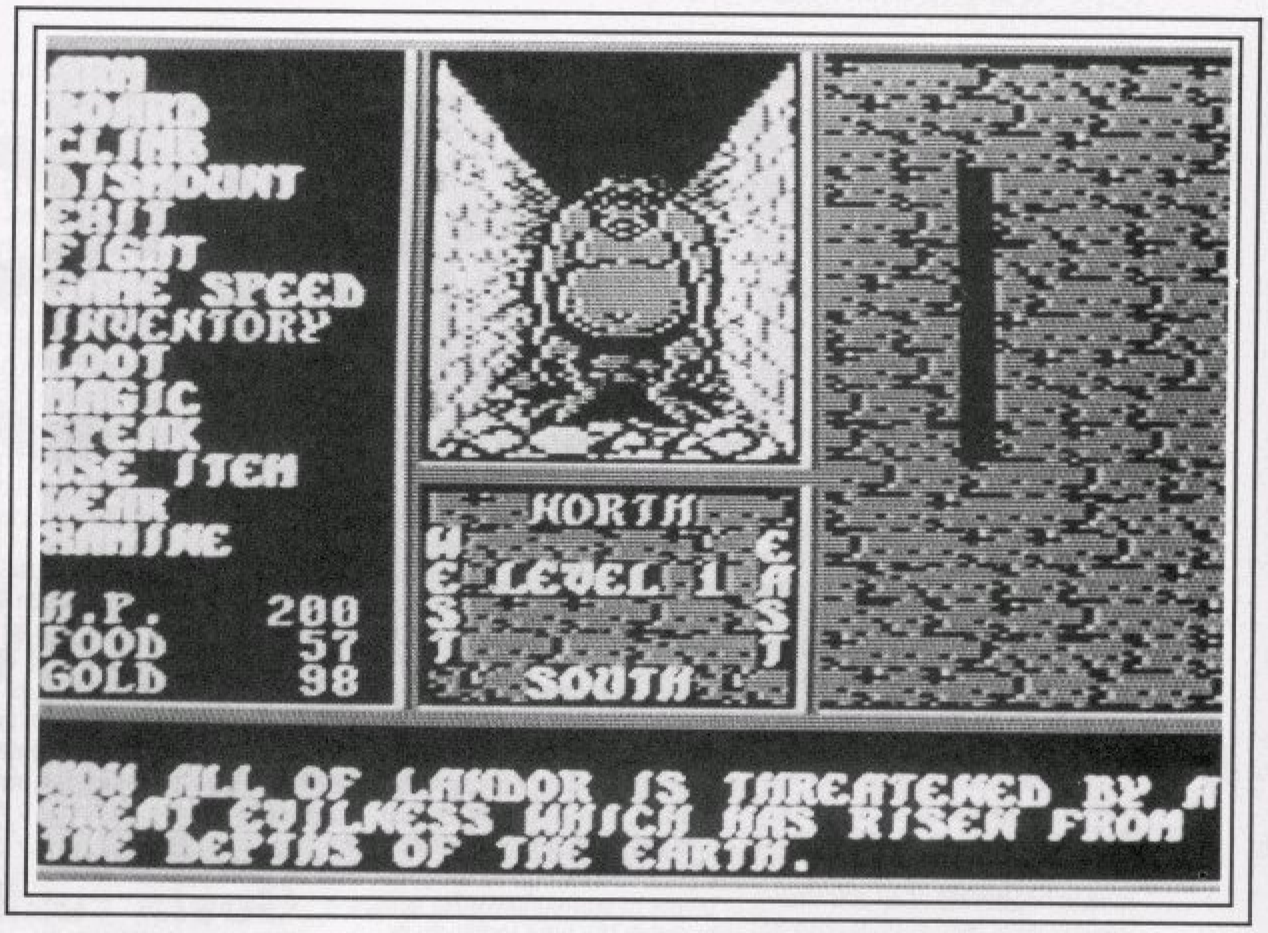
Your character can go up in ranks of ability determined by your performance in the game. You start at the bottom of the ladder as a humble pleb and work your way up through ranks like adventurer and apprentice. There are also scores for strength, agility, stamina, charisma and intellect, each one coming in handy in their own special way. Agility determines how good you are at hitting the enemy, strength how much damage you cause.

The most impressive section has to be the dungeons. These are graphically superior to all the other screens. You journey down 3D tunnels deep under the surface of the continent in search of treasure, and for once you might find being attacked a little more pleasant as the graphics for the monsters are fab.

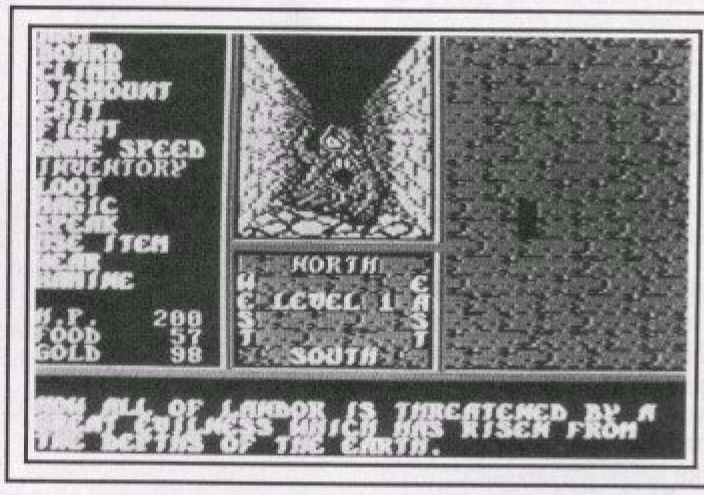
The easiest way to make money is by gambling. If you can work out a good system there's nothing to stop your personal fortune going into tens of thousands. And there's no shortage of things to spend your winnings on, weapons, armour, transport, magic and more, all essential to complete the game.

There is so much to *Questron II* that I couldn't cover it all in the space allocated, but what I can say is if you're a fan of computer rôle playing this is well worth the money.

Mark Patterson

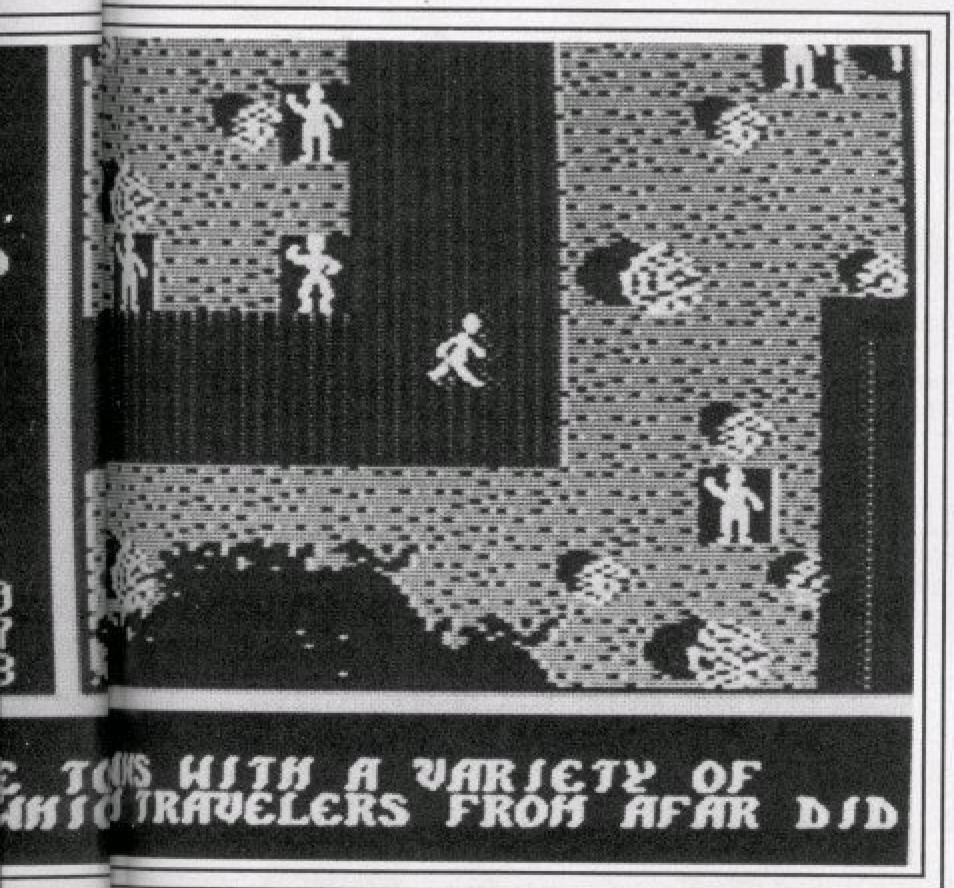


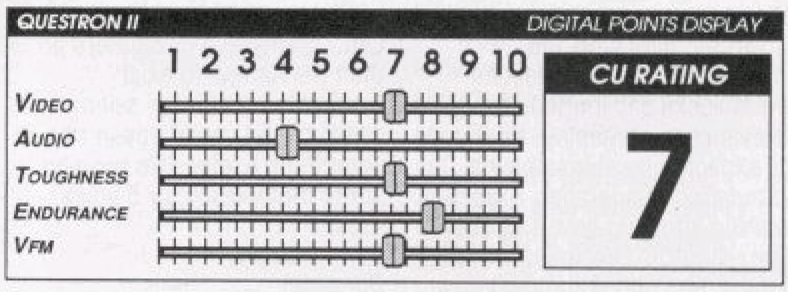
▲ *... But what's a sumo wrestler doing down here?*



▲ *Beset by (non-matchstick) monsters in the dungeons . . .*

▼ *Searching for Ye Olde General Stores.*





Letters

Half Nelson

I'm going through your mag, I see *Microleague Wrestling*, brill, see that its got 4 out of 10. So I read the review only to see that the prat who reviewed it doesn't know sod all: (a) Macho Man is not black, he is white; (b) Mr Wonderful is brill and is not boring at all and the reason Hulk gets to fight both is because he was the WWF Heavyweight champ. Just one more moan. Vince McMahon is side kick Jesse the body not the other way round. I know all this because I get it every week. That's it goodbye.
Travis Imms
Sheerness,
Isle of Sheppey,
Kent

Get what? Give this to your teacher because we don't understand the Jesse bit.

Nuked

I wish to strongly complain about the review of *Chernobyl* by Bill Scolding in your May issue. He obviously didn't spend much time with the game, as after 3 hours I was happily running the power station. It looks like he hasn't discovered that access to most of the control diagrams and indicators is via the joystick. He says there are almost no graphics — there are many gauges, a very effective diagram of the station's nuclear core with the water in various areas changing colour as the reactor powers up, and a large and complete diagram of the station, which is labelled and shows pumps, etc.

Mr Scolding says the information on how a reactor works lacks any immediate relevance to gameplay. How does he expect to be able to play a *simulation* of operating a reactor without knowing how it works? The reactor is controlled via rods, valves, etc, and you *must* know what these do.

In answer to his queries, it is clear in the instructions that group 1, 2, etc, raises the control rods, and that ONGI, etc, turns on the generator. There are graphics showing these and their effect, plus sounds effects.

I have no connection with the programmer or publisher, but please, if you are going to review a complicated simulation, please give it to someone who is willing to put in the time to review it properly. Most programs are for kids, so when an adult program comes out, you should ensure it is reviewed in more depth if it has more depth.
M. R. Buckton,
Watford,
Herts

Bill Scolding's an ex-editor and a thorough reviewer. What he objected to was the sensational packaging and the limited appeal of the game. I guess it threw him a bit. We're glad you like it, but its appeal is lost on us anti-nukers. Now a game about wind power, that would be different . . .

Quality control

I agree with the letter in the May edition about your quality. All this American street rubbish, it makes you sound really stupid. It was also right about your decline every 4 months. Last month's mag (April) was rubbish, I read it for 10 minutes, then I just buzzed it away into the darkest corner. This month (May) is pretty good.

Please could you tell that brain clot Tommy that computers other than the Amiga do exist (remember that large selling one called the 64), why doesn't he do something useful, like running a sprite multiplexor, or 5 voice music?
Barry Markey,
Burstow,
Surrey

Why don't people write about the 64 to Tommy? The reason the Amiga queries are there is because people write in! The American street rubbish is ironic, sucker, and if you could only read CU for ten minutes you must have cabbage for brains, dude.

Gosh, really!

In April's issue of Commodore User I was very interested in Thomas Carr's letter about his working 64! I also have a most interesting story about my 64, which I am about to tell you:

One day I was playing on my computer when it blew up! I used to have a working 64, but it doesn't work any more!!

I hope Thomas enjoys reading my letter as much as I enjoyed reading his.
Richard Oakley,
Stourbridge,
W. Mids

Well what do you say Thomas? We reckon this is 10 on a scale of 1-10 for interestingness?

Panned

According to Tony Dillon, the programmers of *Pandora* (reviewed in the May edition) "totally missed the point". Here are some points missed by Mr. Dillon:

1) The entry officer places the pass in your hands, this is indicated by the "HOLDING" window. The pass does not appear in your pockets.
2) The game has a large number of intelligent characters in a relatively small area, contrary to what Mr Dillon has ascertained in his brief sojourn in *Pandora*.
3) If you can't fight a thief, perhaps you can shoot him? Obviously Mr Dillon hasn't found the laser rifle, which is only two screens away from the start position.

After spending over a year designing and writing a game format that would be different from what was available and good to play, we were very disheartened to see the reviewer totally miss the point himself. He attempted to force the game into a *Gauntlet* clone slot. If the reviewer wished to play a *Gauntlet* clone, there are many on the market.

Pandora involves fighting, trading and problem solving in a combination which we feel is quite refreshingly different, and certainly worth the effort to play. Frankly I enjoy a good piece of sarcastic writing, and it was not the style of the review that is so depressing. It is the fact that the reviewer expected the game to be what he later discovered it was not, then got unnecessarily frustrated by one particular problem — and then gave an overall rating so low that nobody will bother to read the review.

There is no other way for the public to find out about new games, except by magazine reviews, and no new ideas will ever emerge if they are flattened on creation.
PSI
(Programming team of *Pandora*)

Tony reckons that if you didn't want to write a *Gauntlet* clone you succeeded anyway. We don't write reviews based on what companies or programmers claim, we simply review them on their merits. Your game merited 3 overall.

Grab it

I am writing in reply to Neil Safi's letter in the April issue of CU. There is indeed a "screen grabbing" program for the Amiga that can capture HI-RES screens from programs and games and enables you to save them as IFF files for printing or editing by graphics software such as *Deluxe Paint* and *Aegis Images*. The program is called *Grabbit* and is written by American software house Discovery Software International. It is available in the UK from Datel Electronics and costs £21.99 (advertised on p. 76 of April CU).

I'd also like to compliment you on an excellent magazine, I plan to buy it whenever there's an AMIGA special, how about an AMIGA specific magazine, guys!
Samer Kurdi,
P.O. Box 981,
Amman,
Jordan

Thanks for the advice. No plans for an Amiga specific yet, but more Amiga supplements on the way.

Clone call

I read with interest, your article on clones last ish, especially Rod Cousens' whinings about arcade licenses being ripped off. This is a problem but how should they deal with it?

Sending writs and screaming blue murder is one way, but has Mr Cousens ever considered producing a good conversion of an arcade game?

You may think it is a silly question but when you look at past Activision 'conversions' like *Enduro Racer* and *Quartet*, one wonders.

Take *Super Sprint*, it was full of bugs, and a real bitch to play, *Grand Prix Simulator* although nothing special, was playable. I'm sure many people would have shelled out an extra seven quid, if it was a good conversion. Good conversions will always outsell clones. Look at *Gauntlet*, that sold probably more copies than all the clones put together.

The 'look and feel' rule is stupid. Think how many games would have been banned if this rule had been applied to *Uridium!* The more clones there are of a game, the more competition there is going to be to produce a good version of a game, which can only be good for us punters.

Imagine if the software companies all tried to do clones of *Enduro Racer*. This would have forced Activision to do a good conversion instead of knocking up a crap conversion in a couple of weeks and releasing it, like they did.

On to the mag, everything is generally great about the mag, except on thing, please, please (I'm on my knees) bring back Hots hots, I miss all that gossip, muck and slander, it was one of the best bits in C.U.

P.S. Please could we have more demotapes, the last one was brilliant!

David Fellows,
Dudley,
West Midlands.

There's another demo tape planned — however there's no plans to bring back Hotshots. Sorry, I know we've broken your heart.



Bad

I would like to say what a stupid snothead that kid from Benfleet is (May ish). First of all if the reviewers want to speak differently, you can't stop them, it isn't against the law, is it? No! cos my dad's a copper and I asked him!

Anyway if you think it's childish American slang language, you're talking a load of pigcrap. If you go to London, you will hear many people saying things like "well 'ard" or "that's wicked.

It's not American at all, and anyway, it brightens up C.U. I suppose you 'BAC' from Benfleet would prefer our reviewers to say "this game was jolly good, all of the chaps and chappesses enjoyed it," I mean, I'd be embarrassed to say something like that, wouldn't you? The language that the C.U. crew use is perfectly understandable, so stop moaning and read C.U. properly, instead of searching the mag for pointless mistakes all day. You should be grateful.

Andrew 'Prime' Fiddy,
Bucks.

Absolutely! Well def letter! Yo! Erm, good show!

No reward

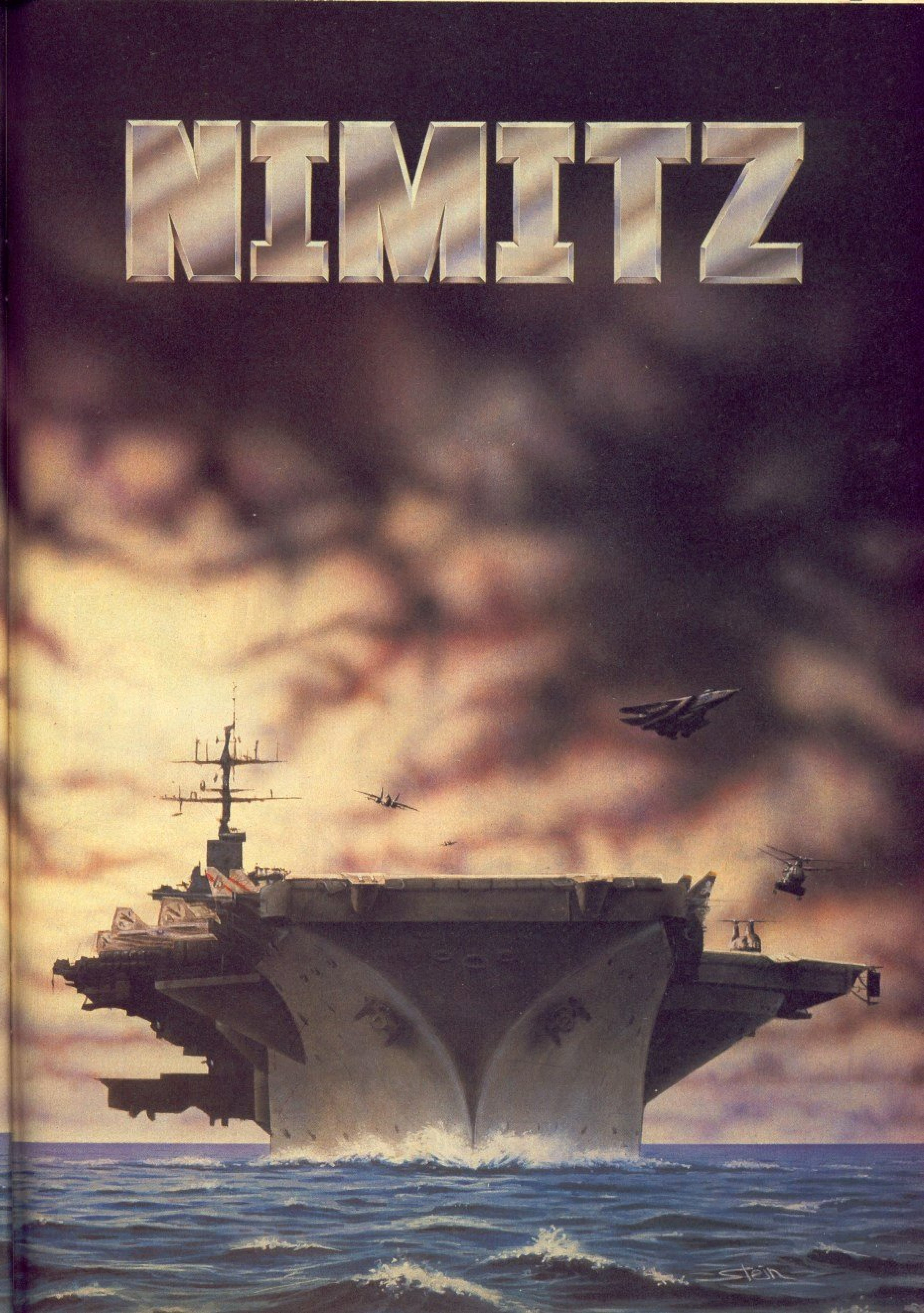
Having flown a *Stealth Mission* in Central Europe, to destroy the runway south of Berlin, I was awarded the blue ribboned Congressional Medal of Honour.

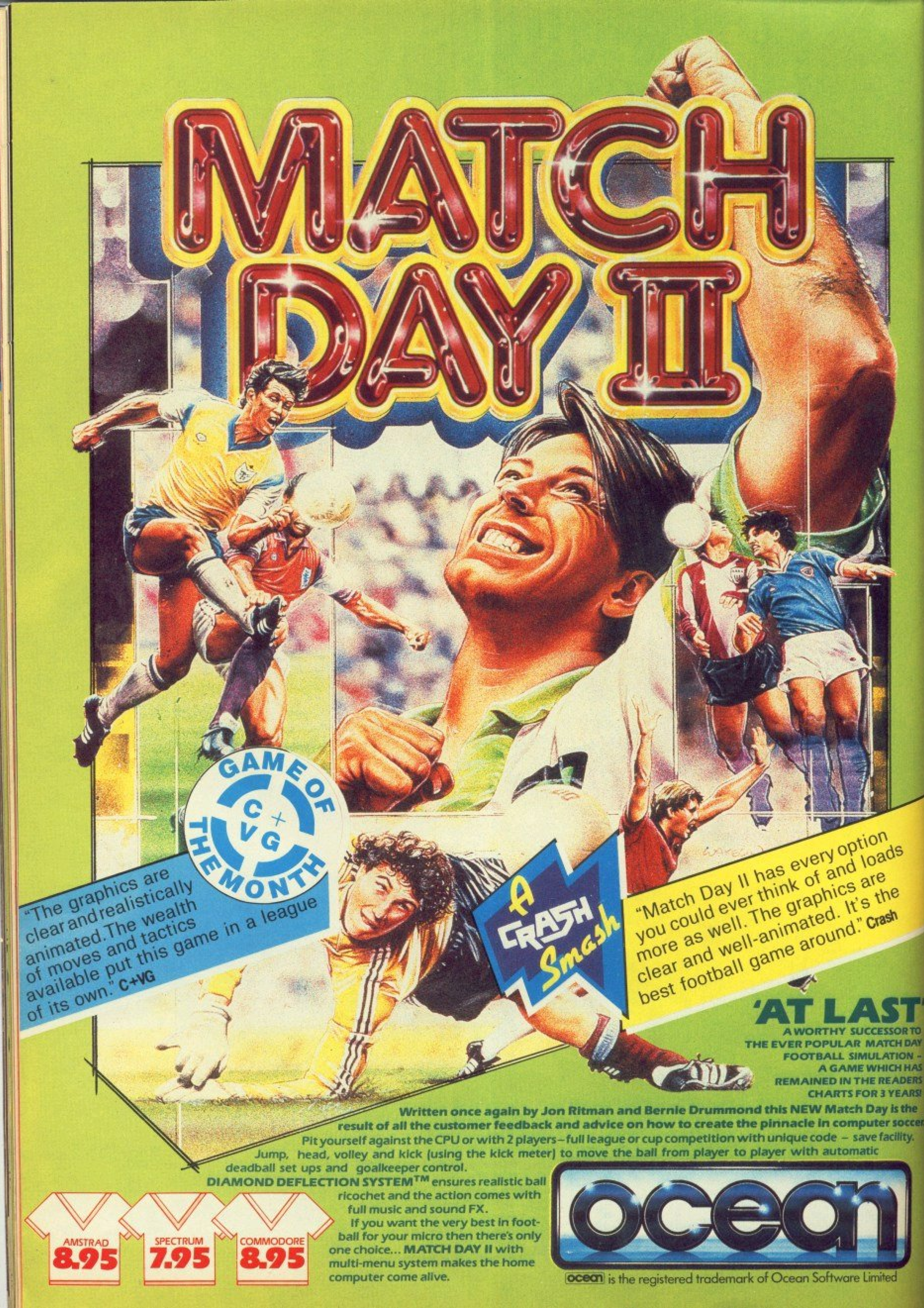
I would be grateful if you would forward to me, the certificate awarded to only the elite pilots.

Lt. Col. J. J. Bennett,

Umm, sorry to disappoint everyone who sent us letters asking for a Congressional medal but Bill Steeley wrote the piece and when he said *us* he meant Microprose!


TAKE COMMAND!
Technical data: SIZE: 71000 tonnes, LENGTH: 332 metres,
WIDTH: 40.8 metres (flight deck 76.8m), DRAUGHT: 11.3 metres,
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anti missile, anti aircraft and early warning systems, CREW: 6290 men.
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NIMITZ


MATCH DAY II
GAME OF THE MONTH C+VG
"The graphics are clear and realistically animated. The wealth of moves and tactics available put this game in a league of its own." C+VG
A CRASH Smash
"Match Day II has every option you could ever think of and loads more as well. The graphics are clear and well-animated. It's the best football game around." Crash
'AT LAST'
A WORTHY SUCCESSOR TO THE EVER POPULAR MATCH DAY FOOTBALL SIMULATION – A GAME WHICH HAS REMAINED IN THE READERS CHARTS FOR 3 YEARS!
Written once again by Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond this NEW Match Day is the result of all the customer feedback and advice on how to create the pinnacle in computer soccer.
Pit yourself against the CPU or with 2 players – full league or cup competition with unique code – save facility.
Jump, head, volley and kick (using the kick meter) to move the ball from player to player with automatic deadball set ups and goalkeeper control.
DIAMOND DEFLECTION SYSTEM™ ensures realistic ball ricochet and the action comes with full music and sound FX.
If you want the very best in football for your micro then there's only one choice... MATCH DAY II with multi-menu system makes the home computer come alive.
AMSTRAD 8.95
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PIRACY
HACKING AT THE INDUSTRY'S ROOTS

by Mike Pattenden

'Europe is open for business in 1992.' That's what everyone from Margaret Thatcher to Alan Sugar is telling us at the moment. But try telling that to the network of hackers throughtout Europe. They've been trading cracked games and demos for *years*.

Once a month, maybe more, gangs of hackers meet up at a preset venue armed with blank disks which they use to copy every new release available on the circuit. Last month in Venlo, Holland you could have picked up *Street Sports Soccer*, *Aaargh!* and *Super Hang On*. That's pretty impressive when the first two are as yet unreleased and *Super Hang On* has been shelved.

Copy parties are simply the international gatherings for the crews and their friends to get together and swap ideas and games. Behind these occasions lies an organised hacking network of such technical ability and resourcefulness that the software industry is at a loss to stop it.

The map overleaf gives some idea of the enormity of the task that confronts them. No country is 'safe' and that only includes the best known names. Germany has nearly 50 gangs, whilst I tracked down a dozen in this country.

The main motive with the crews is games cracking. It's a test of contacts, technical skill, and speed. Many of the gangs have ways and means of getting hold of titles before they appear. Otherwise when a game's released, and games are always released on the Continent first, it's a race to see who can hack through the protection first and put it out on the network. It's all about kudos. And the competition is hot — Psygnosis' *Obliterator* was cracked within hours of its release, despite some of the toughest protection available on its loader.

It doesn't stop here. Games are cracked, given new loading screens, boasting the name of the crew, and frequently compacted so they load quicker. On occasion the games are even polished up, improved in a way clearly beyond the original programmer. From there they're displayed on billboards (non-official ones, naturally) where they're downloaded, copied manyfold and handed round to everymother's son who knows someone on the misappropriation merrygoround.

To some it's a game, but to most it's deadly serious. What they do is illegal. At best it is "distribution to the prejudice of the owner" — an offence under the Copyright Act that could involve the repayment of hundreds of pounds in damages and confiscation of hardware. At worst it could involve criminal proceedings with more serious consequences. Over in Holland and Germany the police raid PO boxes and have made numerous arrests. This country is fairly relaxed and life for the hackers is easy. But not if FAST (Federation Against Software Theft) have their way.

"The resultant loss of revenue through hacking is substantial . . . the problem is not exaggerated," says Bob Hayes, FAST's chief. It's not exaggerated, it's underestimated by many. Upper estimates of the cost suggest hacking/pirating costs companies up to 50% of their sales. And they don't like it. Most now build the costs into their price, and claim that price would come down if their profits weren't limited by these losses. The hackers dismiss that suggestion and say if games were good enough they'd buy them.

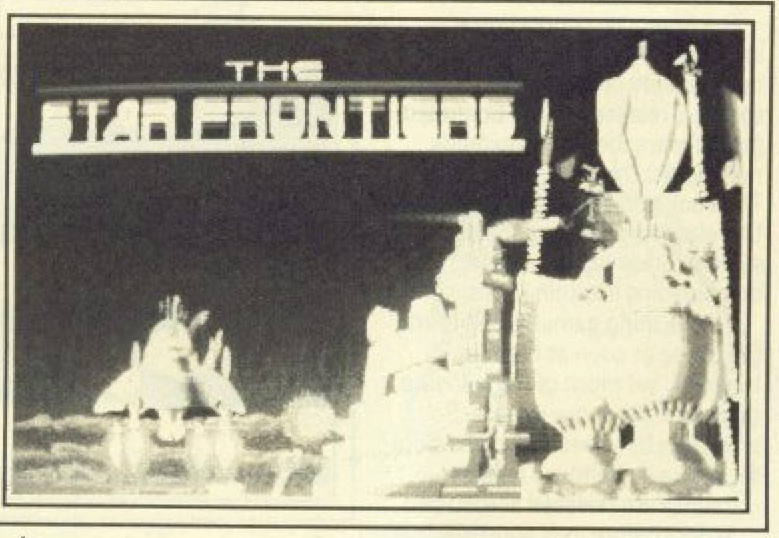
Do it for love

It is a fact that most hackers don't sell the games they crack.

"We're not making a profit," said one crew member. "We copy games simply because most software is not worth buying." Hackers consider most games poorly programmed and over-priced. The pricing of 16 bit software is a particular source of anger. Prices of £20-£25, they say, are simply not justified — an argument rejected by the companies who point to disk prices and extra development costs.

In fact many crackers go as far as to say that they do the industry good, an argument difficult to justify, especially when many refuse to get involved legitimately in the business. Their abilities are not in doubt — one look at many of the demos they specialise in, with their slick visual effects and sampled sound is enough to prove that. But many are simply not interested in channelling their ideas creatively or even simply in making money through their proficiency, a fact that some software managers find hard to believe.

"There's a lot of talent out there, if only they could channel their energies legitimately," says FAST's Bob Hayes. That's an idea thrown out by many who view the whole industry suspiciously.



▲ ***A typical Amiga demo.***

Aaargh! It's contagious!

One cracker who has made the transition is Christian Weber of the SCA (Swiss Crackers Association) — the man responsible for the infamous Virus. Swiss company Linel signed him up to write software for them. Ironically his first works will include a copy protection system and a virus protector! That's tantamount to treachery in the eyes of many of the crews.

"People said viruses similar to those on the VAX and IBM computers couldn't exist and I set out to prove them wrong," says Christian. "But I never wanted to destroy any software with it."

Christian Weber has gone over to the other side. There's a code of honour among crackers. You don't cooperate with the industry or provide information about fellow hackers.

If that all sounds pretty conspiratorial, that's because it is. The hacking network is organised. Although there is rivalry between teams, they collaborate in the circulation of games and demos. They even have their own publications. Photocopied fanzines like 'Delirious' and 'It's Illegal (But Who Cares?)' provide information about current goings-on on the hacking scene and flaunt illicit activities. April's issue of It's Illegal, the magazine published by Germany's TRIAD group carries news, interviews with hackers, a report on the Venlo copy party, a review of *Rolling Thunder*, a debate on the relative merits of 64 and Amiga, classified ads, news of the latest cracked games and charts. Basically it revels in its downright naughtiness, but at the same time it reaffirms the reasoning behind hacking. It holds the software industry in complete contempt and almost goes as far as to rationalise a kind of Robin Hood image for itself. In an interview in the March edition a guy called Ian from Brit hackers Fusion talks of his reasons for hacking: "To give people who can't afford to buy a game the chance to have it."

This view is backed up time and time again by anyone connected



PIRACY

with piracy. 'Software is overpriced, I wouldn't buy a tenth of the games I see. And I couldn't afford to either.'

Hacking is as old as the machines on the market. Demos on 8 bit machines have been around for years, and many still prefer the challenge of squeezing the best from their 64s. But as the 16 bit market begins to take off, so the crews start to put together more and more impressive demos, featuring multi-colour effects, wavy screens and slices of music sampled from records.

The danger however comes from the hacking. With the portability of 3½" disks, the fact that everyone with an Amiga and an ST has a disk drive, and the new stimulus provided by these machines, 16 bit hacking is reaching epidemic proportions. That's a source of concern, especially to the companies that have already made the transition to these machines.

Most vulnerable to this form of piracy are Psygnosis who only produce ST and Amiga Software. Their recently released *Obliterator* went the same way as the rest of their releases — on to the hacking circuit within hours of its release in Europe.

We give up!

"I'm not surprised," concedes programmer Dave Lawson. "The disk cannot be copied because there's so much protection on it, but it can be patched, there are areas where it can be disabled." When you consider that *Obliterator,* Psygnosis claim, cost £250,000 from inception to the moment it was shipped, estimates of 50% losses on sales because of the various forms of piracy must be pretty worrying.

"I don't think they damage us that seriously, we offer class packaging, posters, badges — extra incentives to make people buy."

Companies like Psygnosis and Rainbird have frequently resorted to providing novellas with passwords contained in them. The hackers just photocopy them. In *Carrier Command's* case they don't have to. Holding down the SHIFT key as it loads means that you can type in the same word every time.

That view is not echoed by others involved in the industry. Mirrorsoft who publish Cinemaware's 16 bit releases in this country are more concerned. Marketing Manager Tom Watson voiced his worries: "The real danger is we could go the same way as the ST market in the States where stuff went straight into public circulation through the bulletin boards. Now the ST market is dead over there and the hackers contributed towards that."

The American connection is important. Whilst the Euro crackers manage very nicely thank you with software releases on the Continent, the software theft chain extends right across the water, to the US. The Yank hackers are getting hold of US releases, phreaking the phone system (breaking into it) and downloading it within hours.

It's one thing games going round the circuit as soon as they're released, but much of the software that circulates is pre-release. So where the hell does it all come from?

- *European software retailers* — games are released abroad two weeks before they appear in this country, therefore many crackers in this country have them well before the UK release date.
- *US hackers* downloading American software way before its release.
- *Shops.* Some retailers, or their employees participate in feeding the hackers software on its release.
- *Programmers.* Many programmers are involved or are used unwittingly to provide their own games and those of their colleagues.

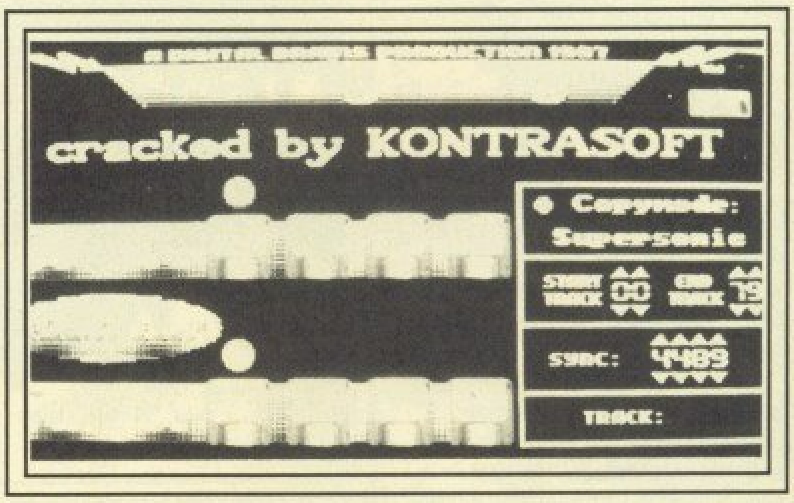
That may sound difficult to believe, but the disease runs right through the industry. So how is the industry attempting to cure it?

Protect and survive

System 3's Tim Best has his own ideas. "Software disks have become the new generation of swopsies, and it's difficult to know how to combat that, but it's their outlets which we must close. I know of a guy in Watford who went through 11 games in one day simply by taking them back to the shop and exchanging them. Shop assistants are contributing to the problem."

"We also need some kind of additional hardware, a sort of sophisticated dongle device. We tested one of our titles against the various cartridges on the market and only two failed."

The position over protection and back-up cartridges is a delicate one. As soon as protection is updated a new cartridge appears on the market. No-one is in a more delicate position to talk about this than



Cracked title screen from a copier.

PHREAKING

This is a form of hacking particularly rife in the US where the crackers borrow the Alliance company's conference system and set up conferences all over the world for free. It's done by hacking out the codes by getting the computer to autodial each possible number until if finds the correct one. It costs the company millions of dollars.

Phreaking also allows pirates to modem trade cracked software for free. Mail trading however is still the most commonest form of dealing because there's less risk involved.

The US phone companies respond by:

- **Blasting fake carrier signals to the hacker's computer to waste their time.**
- **Tracing calls. Using ANI (Automatic Number Indicator) the service can trace all calls.**
- **TRAPping. The phone company sends out false codes to hackers. As soon as they dial the code they are traced and monitored until they have enough evidence to convict them. There is no way of telling whether a code is false or not.**

TOP FIVE EURO DEMOS

1 Think Twice V — The Judges
2 F.A.M.E. – F.A.M.E./TRIAD
3 Might – C64CG
4 Factory – CFR
5 Outspace – Orion

programmer John Twiddy who has, in the past, been responsible for writing both games and the notorious Expert cartridge software. I put one hacker's accusation to him that he was a "hypocrite".

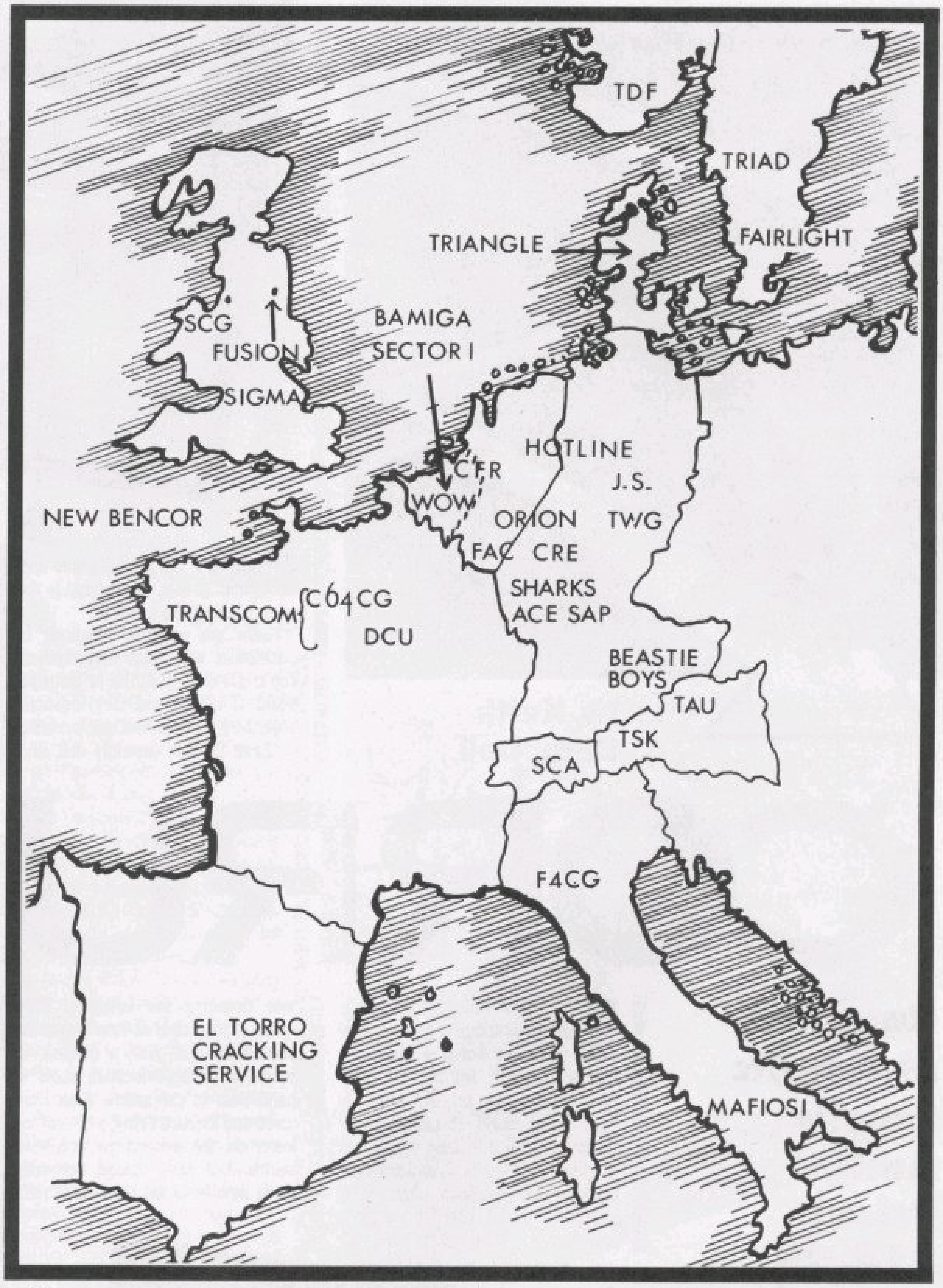
"I don't think so, I developed the original Expert to help me program and that's what I intended it to be used for. Many programmers find it invaluable. Other companies jumped on the bandwagon."

The back-up cartridge is one avenue open that may soon be closed. The Copyright And Design Patent Bill currently going through Parliament contains an amendment to make it illegal to market or sell anti-spoiler devices like copiers. That of course won't stop the experts though. The basic tenet is still, as John Twiddy put it, "You can spend months developing protection for a game and someone will come along and crack it in a day. It's a matter of principle to them.

A disk CU was sent, said simply, "nice protection but the copy killer was killed". Honour has been satisfied.

Wouldn't it help matters if companies released games simultaneously in this country when they went abroad? Here the politics of the industry come into play. If you release on the same day all over Europe, English distributors will sell to the European market. Software houses *have* to build in a delay. If they don't foreign distributors won't agree to take as many copies and they won't sell as many. And who wants that?

The most deep-rooted problem seems to be the material that comes from within the industry. Many of the hacked games that appear are 75% finished and have come direct from a source closely involved with the business. For example there is a demo of a game called *Katakis* currently floating around the circuit which bears a close resemblance to *R-Type* and is currently being programmed by Rainbow Arts. We're not even supposed to know of its existence, but German hackers TRIAD are pouring out disks!



The European hacking circuit.

In another case copies of *Carrier Command* on the ST have turned up on the network and been traced back directly to a company doing conversion work for Firebird. They work in the offices above *CC*'s programmers Real Time. Someone got careless.

So what are Firebird going to do about it? Nothing. The company involved do conversion work and it would make things very awkward. But by this token they'll never stop it. As one Brit cracker put it "The industry's wrecking itself from inside."

The crackers point directly towards the companies and the programmers for encouraging it. "They definitely help us," said one. But the companies are at a loss to make games more secure. "It's difficult for us to know how much goes on," said Telecomsoft's Sean Brennan.

However most companies do take precautions with software that goes out. The most common method is 'fingerprinting', a technique which involves changing a line of code imperceptibly, so — should a rogue version appear — it can be traced back to the source. However that's only useful for closing the stable doors long after the software Shergar has bolted.

This is a particular problem for companies who use freelance programmers, but even companies with large in-house development teams have had problems. Elite have just spent more than a year assembling a complete internal squad and are anxious not to lose programs as they have before now.

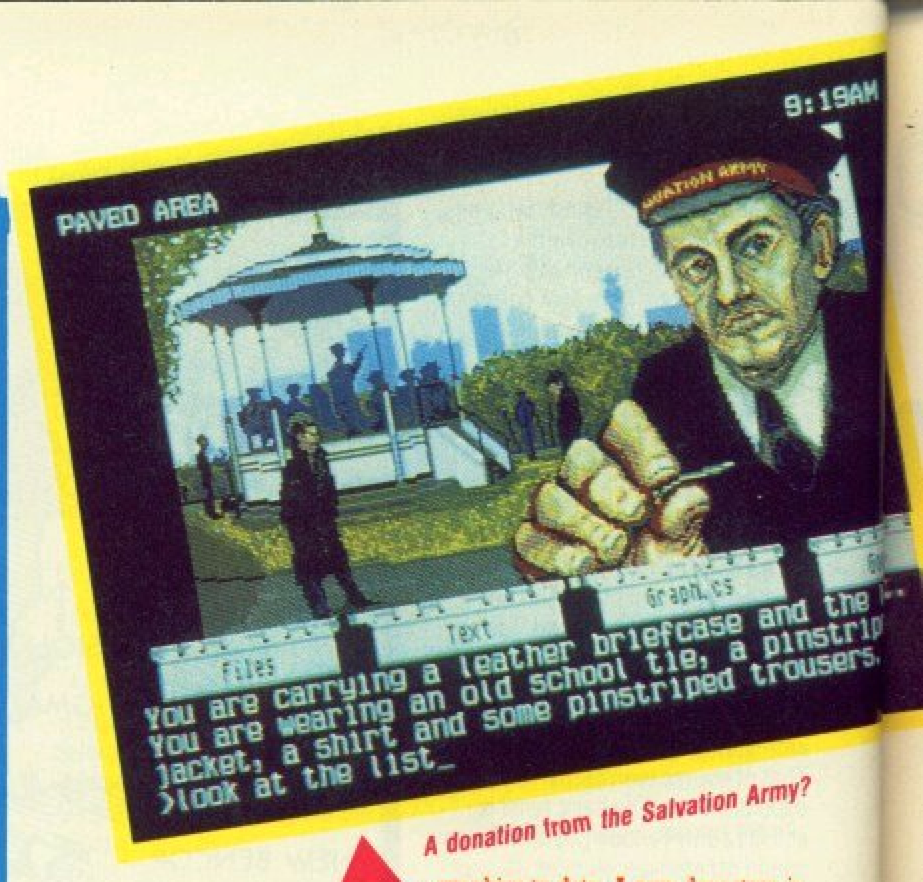
"What's been a problem in the past is that people's mates were just walking straight into the place without our knowledge. Now that's not possible," says Marketing Manager Bernard Dugdale. But what if they take stuff home, you can't search people?

"There's no way of protecting against someone doing it wilfully, but programmers are under contract and they collect royalties, so they shouldn't want to lose out."

But practice suggests that some do and a number of hackers have pointed fingers. "Some of them just don't care," said one, a member of the *Ikari* team. However, rumours of chief programmers and top industry artists being involved are rife in the hacking network and are frequently unsubstantiated. Only those directly involved know for sure. And naturally, they're not saying.

INTO THE VALLEY

by Keith Campbell



A donation from the Salvation Army?

CORRUPTI

Rainbird/ Magnetic Scrolls
Amiga
Price: £24.95

The new Magnetic Scrolls adventure, due to hit your local computer stores within a few weeks from now, will be very different from its three predecessors. Set in the real world of today's Stock Exchange, you'll find no wizards or dragons, no guardians, and not even a single subterranean labyrinth to explore. Instead, the victim of a frame-up, you'll be out to save your own skin in a world of intrigue and corruption. In fact, *Corruption* is the name of the game.

There are only 50 locations in *Corruption*, and about 28 graphics. You might think graphics reflecting a world of offices and City locations might be a bit drab and uninteresting — Anita Sinclair certainly did, and was dreading the outcome. They spent a good deal of time 'swanning around London' with a camera, in searth of suitable location shots to hand over to the artists. Alan Hunnisett and Richard Selby, were not too keen on the subject pictorially, it seems, but have turned out what Anita now feels are the best Scrolls' graphics to date. A new departure is the inclusion of a few 'situation' graphics.

Corruption concerns insider dealing on the Stock Exchange, in which you become the chief suspect. A newly appointed partner in a firm of brokers, you find yourself in your new office on the first day of your job, being welcomed by David Rogers, the senior partner. Leaving you to settle in, he disappears, and it soon becomes apparent that he is up to no good. But you don't realise quite what it is, until the long arm of the law is clamped firmly on your shoulder, and you end up in the dock.

The first time you play the game, you won't be able to save yourself. To achieve this, you have to play it through a few times, watching people, talking to them, and gathering evidence to clear your name.

There are about 30 characters in *Corruption*, and you can interact with about 15 of them. Some of those you will early on in the proceedings, are Margaret, your secretary, Hughes, the company lawyer, Theresa, David's secretary, and Barbara, the cleaning lady.

During the game they all go about their daily business — that is to say, you will find them at different places, doing different things, at different times of the day. One move on the computer moves the time, displayed at the top of the screen, one miniute forward. As you come into contact with them, it pays to determine their attitudes towards each other, and their opinions about other characters.

The form of speech is limited to asking someone or telling someone



Bye bye BMW...





about something. Depending on its relevance to the plot, you either get a reaction of information that will help you, or else a catch-all answer, something that is fairly sensible in context, but not terribly helpful.

A very useful command in the game is FOLLOW. If you are tracking someone's movements, FOLLOW ‹name› followed by a series of RETURNs, keeps you in the same location as the character under observation as he or she moves from place to place. By building up a picture of people's movements, and finding key documents and a few other objects, you eventually het a pretty good idea of how the frame is being set up.

From then on you have to devise a way to thwart it — not an easy task, for it seems there are enemies everywhere. However, you might find you have some unexpected friends, if you've done your groundwork thoroughly.

To successfully complete the game, you must be thoroughly mean and unscrupulous — or so I'm told.

Rob Steggles author of *The Pawn*, has spent most of the past year writing *Corruption*. But both he and Anita Sinclair are very concerned that people don't rush out and buy

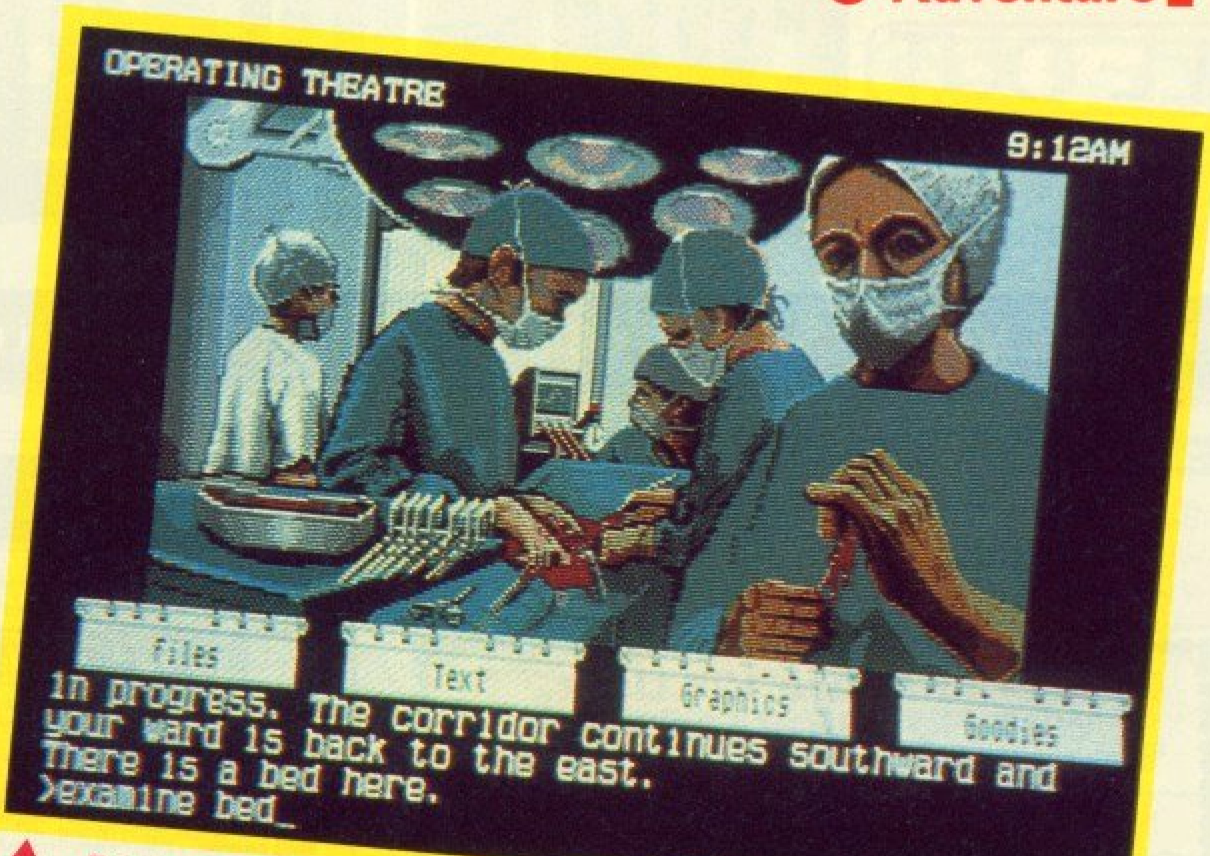
TION

Corruption purely because they enjoyed Magnetic Scrolls' last adventure, *Jinxter*. "*Jinxter* was a very humorous game, with manipulative type problems. It doesn't follow that if you enjoyed *Jinxter*, or even *Guild*, you will enjoy *Corruption*."

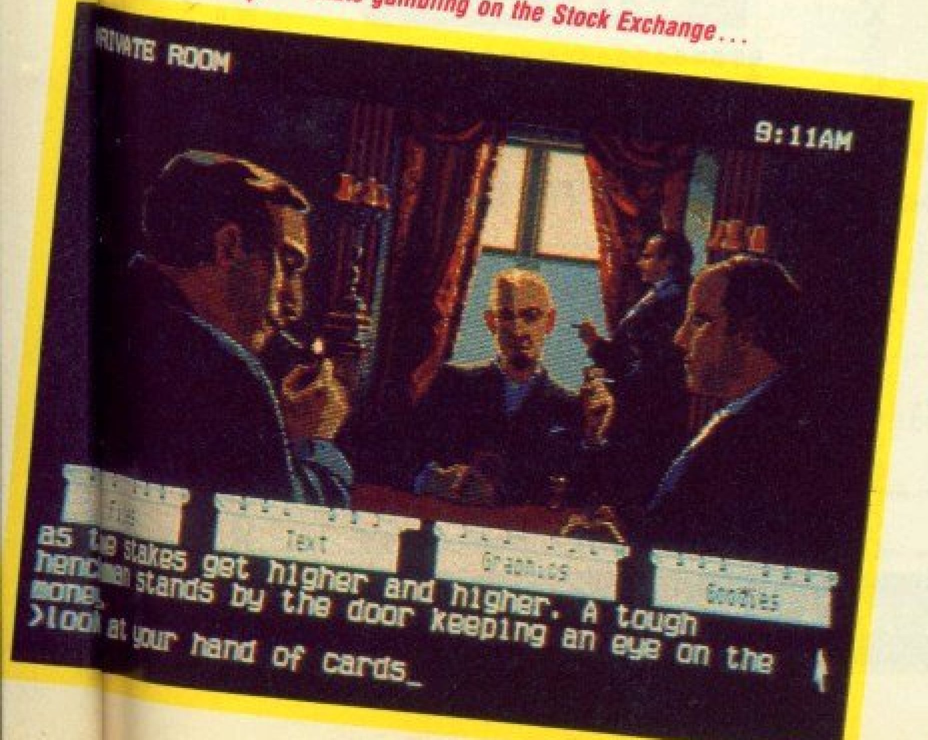
The last thing Magnetic Scrolls want is for gamers to spend their money and be disappointed. They see *Corruption* having a limited appeal amongst their tradititional fans, and possibly a much wider following among business users of computers. Having said that, it doesn't necessarily mean that you won't like the game.

Rob's enthusiasm for *Corruption* shows through. "It's a completely different type of adventure," he explained, "and Hugh has worked wonders making it possible." Hugh wrote, and continues to be responsible for Magnetic Scrolls' parser.

Since the Scrolls' parser already shares a top-of-the-league position with Infocom, one might have expected Hugh's day to day parsing activities to have been confined to the continual process of maintenance and marginal improvements. However, to see why he has been so heavily involved, it is necessary to understand the implications behind the different nature of *Corruption*, compared with other Magnetic Scrolls titles.



There's no need to get cut up about it.



Beats gambling on the Stock Exchange . . .

Graphics .. 10
Playability .. 9
Puzzleability .. 9
Overall ... 8



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ADVERTISMENT INDEX

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INTO THE VALLEY

BY KEITH CAMPBELL

DEMON FROM THE DARKSIDE

Compass Software 64/128 Price: £2.50/ cassette

Mail order from Compass Software at: 111 Mill Road, Cobholm, Great Yarmouth, NR31 0BB.

Drakon, the wizard of Valonia, came by a Falcon staff, and, because he did not destroy it (so the story goes) was turned to the dark side of magic. He sent an army of demons to conquer Valonia. Disguising himself with a golden mask, Drakon now began to walk among humans, taking their souls at the dead of night to feed to the Skull of Evil.

Ashmeard, the wizard of Dral, seized the mask, whereupon Drakon entered the cave of Illindel, and was not seen again. But that was ten years ago, and once again, a demon army is marching on Valonia. As Ashmeard's apprentice, your task is kill Drakon, and retrieve the Falcon staff, before the army crosses the lake.

This is a Quilled Illustrated adventure from Compass Software, whose games have, until now, been available solely for the Spectrum. Compass has produced a number of budget priced adventures over the last couple of years, and their standard ranks high amongst mail-order adventures.

The bodies of the demon army lay all around as you start the game, and before long you find yourself trapped in a cave by a mysterious force. The problems are quite nicely pitched — enough to make you think a bit, but not enought to cause you to grind to a halt, as you battle your way through the caves, and seek ways to overcome the demons that lurk within.

Sudden death tends to strike from time to time, but not altogether without warning. However, one of the avoid-death puzzles involves USE (object), an occasionally used adventure command that I find very unsatisfactory, as I believe one of the essential ingredients of adventure problems is to discover exactly HOW to use the objects. USE tends to be a cop-out by the author.

The graphics, less than one per location, are quite pleasing and detailed. The display time of these is more tolerable than the built-in delay every time something dramatic happens in the game play. Quite the most tiresome feature of the game, this delay forces you to wait about ten seconds before being able to continue — a quite unnecessary impediment, I would have thought, since one of the arts of adventure writing is surely to reduce response times to as short as possible!

Packaged in a normal size cassette box, *Demon* has a professionally produced inlay. The only fault in its presentation I could find, was the omission of the machine type on which the program would run. Provided that different versions do not get mixed up at the supply end, this should not cause any bother except to reviewers, who are usually surrounded by piles of software, and have a number of different computers at their disposal.

Demon From The Darkside can be recommended to anyone seeking a budget priced cassette adventure that is enjoyable, holds the interest, and is not mind-bendingly difficult. It is certainly infinitely better than a few recent commercial budget releases, like *Football Frenzy*, for example.

Graphics ... 7
Puzzleability .. 7
Playability .. 7
Value ... 9

ADVENTURE CLUES

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE:
Jump to defeat the Evil-Lynn.

JINXTER:
Burn the bread to keep your charm!

DRACULA:
Got a problem with a dog the next day? Stand on the table, examine it, and throw what you find.

ZORK 2:
To open the box, put the string in the brick and the brick in the hole, then light the fuse, and be extremely careful!

RIGEL'S REVENGE:
Give the dog a bone in the alleyway, and wait. Then go U, W, and S, to pass the tank.

BEYOND ZORK:
Tine = Fork. Report = Noise. Light travels faster than sound!

LEGEND OF THE SWORD:
Try waking a treetop monster rather than killing him!

GOLDEN CHALICE AWARDS

The Adventurer's Club Ltd. has announced its annual Golden Chalice Awards for 1987, following a vote by 823 of it's 2000 odd members, all of whom are keen adventure game players.

Golden Chalice: *Gnome Ranger* — Level 9
Silver Chalice: *Rigel's Revenge* — Mastertronic/Smart Egg
Bronze Chalice: *Knight Orc* — Rainbird/Level 9
Honorable Mention: *Guilde Of Thieves* — Rainbird/Magnetic Scrolls

This gives Level 9 the hat trick, having won with *Worm in Paradise*, and *Price of Magik*, in 1985, and 1986, respectively.

BIGGER BETTER RIGEL

Watch out for the award-winning *Rigel's Revenge* (see above) on the Amiga, soon! Smart Egg Software are enhancing the game with more text and better graphics, for this 16-bit version. To be released by Mastertronic, it will be priced at £19.95.

VALLEY RESCUE

We kick off this month with a plea for a penpal. Krystof Struszczak of Lodz in Poland, would very much like to correspond with someone from England, to exchange information about working with a Commodore 64, and chat about the computer and adventure scene in the UK. Anyone who would like to get in touch with Krystof should write to me at The Valley, with brief details of age and interests, and I will send on suitable replies.

"Dear Saviour" wrote Tony Griffin from Dublin, going on to explain the trouble he is having with *Crystals Of Carus*. But saviour I was not, having not the slightest inkling about what goes on in the game. Tony wants the crystal ball, and the solution to the riddle on the island.

Tony, as well as many others, has been trying to puzzle his way past the robotank in *Rigel's Revenge*. Puzzle no more — look at this month's clues!

S. Edlington wrote asking for details of any adventure fanzines that are around. Two of the most regular and reliable are Adventure Probe, run by Sandra Sharkey and Mandy Rodrigues, and the Adventurer's Club Ltd. Dossier. Probe is monthly, and costs £1 per issue, cheques payable to S. Sharkey at 78 Merton Road, Wigan, WN3 6AT. For the ACL Dossier, you must be a member of the club. The annual subscription is currently £14.95, for which you get the bi-monthly Dossier, plus use of a phone-in Helpline, discount mail-order adventures, and an advisory service on publishing your own games. ACL application forms are available from The Valley, or from ACL direct at 64c Menelik Road, London NW2 3RH. Incidentally, the rates quoted for both these publications apply only to the UK — for Europe and the rest of the world, check out the price first.

Calling Tony Blakeson of Harrogate! I couldn't answer your *Zork 2* problem, as you didn't include your full address! Yes, everyone who writes to The Valley gets a personal reply — IF we have an address to get back to! So there's a clue in the appropriate place for Tony, to help him open the box! If you need help, or can offer it, then write to me at *The Valley, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.*

Do you buy an adventure 'blind' in the hope that you will enjoy it, or do you read up on it first? Reviews are still the subject of discussion in the Valley mail — here's Gareth:

★I rarely buy a game without reading all the reviews of it in all the magazines I read. Daniel Griffiths said he prefers to buy games on intuition rather than reviews. How can you know the lastability of the game, or the difficulties of its problems through intuition? A quick look at it in your local stockists is not enough for an adventure game — you must play it for a long time. Many hours or even days of play are required. Reviewers like yourself are paid to do this. This is what reviews were invented for, to tell the prospective buyer if his money will be well spent. I feel Daniel's way of buying games could be expensive, by depending on trial and error to find a good one.
Gareth Williams,
Swansea.

Campbell's Comment: Hear! Hear! Anything to keep us reviewers in business, Gareth. And in the main, it is cetainly true that adventure games (as opposed to arcade games) get played for many hours or days before a review. For example, I played *Corruption* for more than fifteen hours, over a period of a week, before writing the review you see in this issue.

Choosing which adventure to buy is one thing — but how on earth do you choose which adventure is the best of the year? Who is qualified to judge?

Various magazines have annual awards for games. Some magazines decide for themselves which are the best. Hmm . . . could that be a dubious choice? Or is the now-famous C+VG Golden Joystick award the most democratic? Votes on games in all categories are open to all readers. What could be fairer? But adventure players should just stop to think for a moment.

Imagine you are one of the majority of readers, (i.e. an arcade player) filling out the voting form. Well, you'd be bound to pencil something in against 'Best Adventure', wouldn't you? After all, you're street-wise as far as computer games go — there's not much you don't know about 'em, is there? Could it be, then, that the Best Adventure Of The Year is ultimately decided by people who have never actually played ANY adventure, let alone the ones for which they are voting?

Which takes us on to adventure fanzines and clubs — surely a hotbed of enthusiasts who know their stuff? But all is still not plain sailing! There are those who don't have disk drives, and those who don't have cassette players! And how do you judge one game against another, irrespective of price? Perhaps there should be price categories, or disk and tape categories?

On reflection, might not the best judges be the reviewers after all, who, let's fact it, have seen more adventures than most people have had hot dinners, combined in a panel? "Ah — but!" I hear you say, "Reviewers are notorious for never having time to actually COMPLETE adventures — so how can they know how good it really is — all the way through?"

Or could it be that there is no such thing as a Best Adventure?

CAMBELL'S COMMENT

Here's a satisfied customer! John Roberts was having difficulty getting a copy of *Zork 1* — so I proposed that he did just what Rod Cousens recently suggested, and mail-order direct from Activision. the result . . . ?

★ Many thanks for your letter re Activision and *Zork 1* for the 64.

I contacted Activision and they referred me to their mail-order department in Wellingborough. I am delighted to say that I received *Zork 1* this morning, and am bursting to get at it.

Thank you very much for your help — my local dealers tried every source of supply they knew without success.

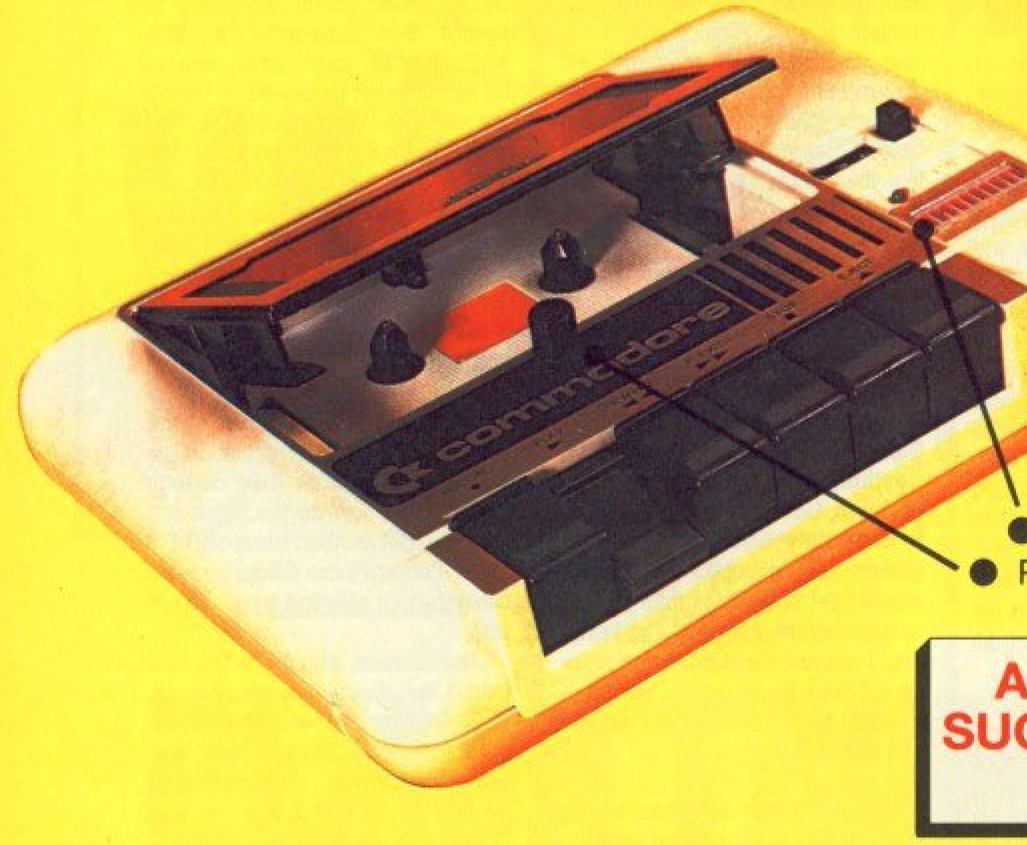
The telephone number for Activision Mail Order is 0933-78787, should it be of interest to other readers. Once again, many thanks.
John Roberts,
Stoke on Trent.

Campbell's Comment: Glad to be of service, John. And equally glad to see that Infocom games CAN still be obtained. Strange, though, that dealers can't supply . . .

INTO THE VALLEY

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the god-like genius of GARY PENN

So you've got a problem — a software problem that is. Who can you turn to for help? Deidre? Marj Proops? Katie Boyle? Naaah. They're more interested in solving hardware problems. Tommy's more of a technical man . . . Tell you what, write to yer omniscient uncle Gaz if you want to know anything about games, both old and new, or more importantly, need some hints, tips or POKEs. The address? The God-like Genius of Gary Penn, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

GREEN BERET
(Imagine)

James Ingham from Solihull was one of the many who either wrote or phoned for some maps, tips or POKE's for this ace ageing arcade conversion. So here's a listing for infinite lives from Nick Brown of Gendros in Swansea. Type it in, RUN it and follow the on-screen prompts to load *Green Beret*.

```
10 FOR N=49152 TO 49183
20 READ A:POKE N,A:NEXT
N:SYS 49152
30 DATA 169, 1, 170, 168,
32, 186, 255, 169
40 DATA 0, 32, 213, 255,
162, 10, 189, 26
50 DATA 192, 157, 205, 5,
202, 16, 247, 108
60 DATA 36, 3, 169, 173,
141, 53, 21, 141
70 DATA 229, 254, 76, 253,
61
```

BUGGY BOY
(Elite)

Oh dear, the reset POKEs on the Cheatcard given away with the February issue seem to be causing a few problems — mainly of the 'How do I reset my 64?' variety. But ne'er ye fear. Martin Pugh from Holywell in Clywd has a solution — this triff listing. Type it in, RUN it and follow the on-screen prompts to load *Buggy Boy* with infinite time.

```
0 REM BUGGY BOY CHEAT
(c) HM PUGH '88
1 FOR X=320 TO 372:READ
Y:C=C+Y:POKE X,Y:NEXT
2 IF C=5249 THEN POKE
157, 128:SYS 320
3 PRINT "DATA ERROR!"
4 DATA 32, 104, 225, 169,
83, 141, 243, 3, 169, 1, 141,
244, 3, 76
5 DATA 13, 8, 72, 80, 169,
97, 141, 26, 4, 169, 1, 141,
27
6 DATA 4, 32, 132, 255, 96,
169, 173, 141, 26, 156, 141,
29, 156
7 DATA 141, 32, 156, 141,
35, 156, 141, 38, 156, 76, 0,
8
```

THE LAST NINJA
(System 3)

Poor old Mark Carter, he's stuck on the first level 'cos he can't get past the dragon. Funnily enough, quite a few people are stuck at this point. So, here's how it's done . . . See this screenshot? This is where you have to stand to throw a smoke bomb at the dragon in order to put him to sleep so you can pass without being frazzled. It's as simple as that.

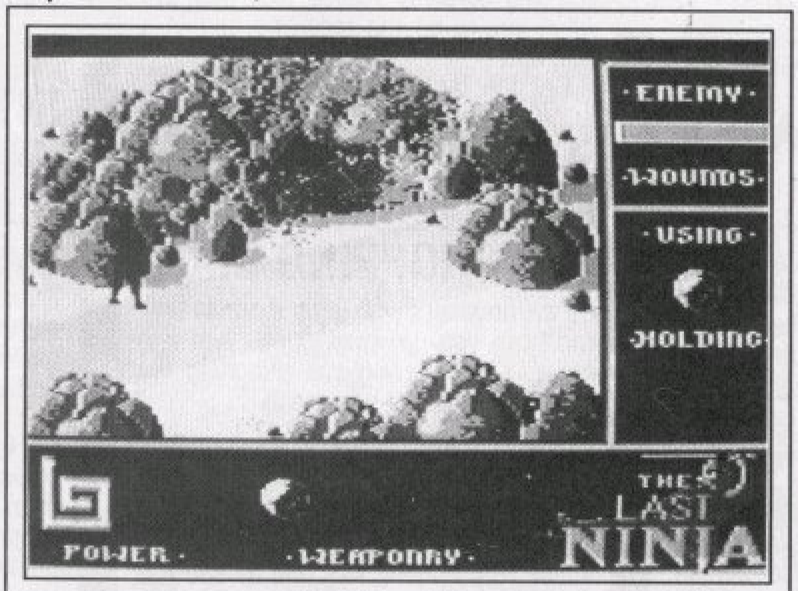
ALIENS
(Electric Dreams)

There have been several requests for POKEs for this ageing game of the fillum, but the best I've got is one from MH Kiani of Ibrox in Glasgow . . . Reset the computer after *Aliens* has loaded, then type in POKE 38408,X (RETURN) — where X is the number of the room in which you wish to start. Now enter SYS 38233 to restart the game. Can anyone oblige with a listing for something like infinite lives and ammunition?

MICRORHYTHM
(Firebird Silver)

Andrew Holland of South Woodford in Essex was reading the *Microrhythm* inlay and noticed that it mentions that the gong is played by pressing the 'up arrow' key. This is a bit of a fib, as pressing the key has no effect whatsoever. "So how can I play the gong?" he asks. Jim Blackler of Lancaster has a solution . . . Load *Microrhythm*, then reset the 64 so you can enter POKE 10429,13 (RETURN) followed by SYS 7103 (RETURN) to restart. You can now play the gong by pressing the 'up arrow' key.

▼ *Stand here to throw the smoke bomb at the dragon. See, it's easy!*



LIVINGSTONE, I PRESUME?
(Alligata)

"I bought a copy of Alligata's *Livingstone, I Presume* for a couple of quid in my local computer shop, but I haven't seen any reviews for it, and even worse I've not seen any tips either," writes Roger Simpson of Uxbridge in Middlesex. "Can you help?" Well, Roger, I'm afraid I can't — but I know a man who can . . . HM Pugh of Holywell in Clywd supplied this listing for infinite lives. Type it in, then RUN it and follow the on-screen prompts to load *Livingstone*.

```
0 REM LIVINGSTONE CHEAT
(c) HM PUGH
1 FOR X=3301 TO
3322:READ Y:POKE
Y:C=C+Y:NEXT
2 FOR X=320 TO 327:READ
Y:C=C+Y:POKE X,Y:NEXT
3 IF C=2948 THEN POKE
157,128:SYS 3301
4 PRINT "DATA ERROR!"
5 DATA 169, 12, 141, 41, 3,
32, 86, 245, 169, 64, 141,
189, 2, 169, 1
6 DATA 141, 190, 2, 96, 72,
77, 80, 169, 173, 141, 134,
69, 76, 0, 64
```

JACK THE NIPPER
(Gremlin Graphics)

R Hutchinson of Chesham, Bucks cant get very far and wants some help. I've no tips to hand, I'm afraid, R, so here's the cheat mode. Type ZAPIT on the title screen: the border should go white and nappy rash will be a thing of the past.

play TO WIN

HINT

VENOM STRIKES BACK

(Gremlin Graphics)

Ronnie Farrington of Upper Bridston Village in Wirrfx (at least I think that's what it says) has found three codes for Matt Tracker's latest romp. So generous is he that Ronnie is willing to share these codes with you — so here they are . . . Type 'em in on the title screen.

MAYHEM turns the scrolling message purple. It also means that when you enter the first teleport booth you will teleport to a later level.
TRANSMOGRIFY turns the scrolling message red, and better still means that when you enter the teleport booth you will be transported to the moon.
PETALS OF DOOM turns the scrolling message grey. Plus, you will now be able to withstand the onslaught of aliens and missiles. But for Heaven's sake don't tread on any mines or fall down the holes.

TRANTOR

(GO!)

Just in case you happen to have a copy of this lying around and you missed the Cheatcard on the front of the February issue, here are some useful codes. . . .

KEMPSTON	COMPUTER
JOYSTICK	CASSETTE
SPECTRUM	SINCLAIR
SOFTWARE	GRAPHICS
KEYBOARD	HARDWARE

TARGET RENEGADE

(Imagine)

So you didn't get a *Target Renegade* cheatcard on the front of this issue, eh? Well even if you did you may still find the going a little tough with infinite lives, so here are some handy hints from Timothy Peers of Caister-On-Sea in Norfolk . . .

LEVEL ONE: THE CAR PARK

As soon as you appear from an elevator on the left-hand side of the screen, perform a flying kick and you should avoid, or better still kill the biker. Don't pick up the bat until you have beaten the bike — chances are you will drop the bat if you mis-time a flying kick to knock the rider off his mean machine and will end up with tread marks on your head. When under attack from two bikers, always deck the one which hasn't just fallen off a bike. He's easier to kill, see.

Keep hitting with the bat. If one of the bikers has the bat though, stand 'on top' of him (so he can't 'see you') and punch the other biker as he approaches.

LEVEL TWO: THE BACKSTREETS

The main problem here is the Lady's Boss with his gun and his cane, neither of which can be stolen. Always take out the ladies as they appear on screen. No, don't offer them a drink — hit them three time in the head. As for the Lady's Bosses, hit 'em with a flying kick before laying into 'em with a few punches to the head. Note: NEVER scroll the screen whilst fighting a Lady's Boss, as another one will appear and then you're in t-rouble.

LEVEL THREE: THE PARK

Not a lot to say here, other than scroll the screen where possible. The little guys may not look too dangerous, but you will certainly realise that they are when you're on the receiving end of a headbutt.

Get the big guys with a flying kick followed by a stomach punch. The small fry should simply be hit in the gut.

LEVEL FOUR: THE SHOPPING MALL

Hit the bouncers with jump kicks so they can't trip you up, then punch 'em and move. Keep moving and punching the bouncers out until you reach . . .

MR BIG

First, move around him until you reach the right-hand side of the screen. Now attack with a flying kick and as soon as you land, leap again. When you reach the left-hand side of the screen, run back to the right and start all over again. If you're feeling a little cocky, punch him when his back's turned. Don't let him grab you — if he gets his hands on you, press fire and waggle like crazy to make him let go.

PLATOON

(Ocean)

Having trouble getting through the tunnel network and the bunker? Then why not skip both sections altogether . . . Having lost all your lives on the tunnel stage, wait for the 'rewind the tape' message to appear and hold down RUN/STOP and tap the RESTORE key. You should start the tunnel section again, but this time when you lose your first life the 'press fire to load the next section' message will appear and the fifth stage (The Jungle) will load instead.

BMX KIDZ

(Silverbird)

From the programer of BMX Kidz, Jo Bonar, comes the cheat mode . . . Load the game and when the title screen appears type VIVALDI (nothing appears on screen). Now press a key from A-F to select the level you wish to play. Go, g-g-go . . .

INTERNATIONAL KARATE

(Endurance games/ System 3)

IK has just seen the light of day (again) on Virgin's *Now Games 5* compilation. So here are some silly 'cheats' for you to try . . . Hold down the keys A, D, Z and M for five seconds to change the backdrop. Hold down X then press a key from 1 to 4, now release the X key to change the speed of the game. Lastly, holding down S and E makes the fighters look at you. Seasoned readers taste best

— erm, will have have seen these 'cheats' before, but we do have to cater for the new as well as the old, dontchaknow.

And while we're on the subject . . . *IK+* has recently been re-released on Ocean's *We Are The Champion* compilation — so how about the 'cheats' for that? OK, S in conjuncton with E makes the fighters drop their kecks (hoo hoo ha). Holding down the *key changes the colour of the sun's reflection, while C, O and L alter the colour of the sky and sea.

TS & TIPS



BANGKOK KNIGHTS (System 3)

Did you know (and not a lot of people know this), that this fightin' an' fumpin' game has a — well, a sort of cheat mode. It doesn't give infinite lives or anything useful like that, oh no. What it does do though, is . . . Tell you what, try it and see for yourself. What you have to do is turn off the music and enter the code 9990. Now play the first few bars of Koyaanasqatsi using the numbers as notes, and voila! The 'cheat' is now active . . .

Ah, yes, Koyaanasqatsi: Try 6360 6360 7370 7370 6269 6269 8070 6030. Bizarre . . .

THE EIDOLON (Ricochet)

Seeing as how this Lucasfilm classic has been re-leased at a budget price, and seeing as how it's rather jolly good, here are some simple, handy hints.

IN GENERAL

Don't shoot off too many fireballs when tackling a dragon as this seriously reduces your energy level and makes you very vulnerable. On later levels you can pick up the fireballs gobbed at you by the dragon, so keep your fingers (or toes) near the space bar. Also, its wise to map your progress if you want to get anywhere.

LEVEL	FIREBALLS TO KILL DRAGON
1	3 RED
2	4 YELLOW
3	5 GREEN
4	6 BLUE
5	7 RED
6	8 BLUE
7	9 RED

As for the big begger on L Eight . . . Well, he's a combination of all the previous dragons, and so the only way you can dispose of him is to destroy each head in turn. Thus you have to shoot off three red fireballs to get rid of the first head, followed by four yellow 'uns, five green and so on . . . Until BOOM! It's worth your while having someone on the space bar as things can turn pretty damn hectic.

BONE CRUNCHER (Superior Software)

From JLJ Schenk of Bonairestraat in Der Netherlands we have all 22 passwords for . . . well, for good measure. You can't have the password for what JLJ calls the 'Winning Screen', 'cos it's not fair (he says, having given away every other password possible).

LEVEL	PASSWORD
2	GOLEMSTENCH
3	MORPHICLE
4	GOLEMKILLER
5	SCARAB
6	WEB OF DEATH
7	MONSTERPARTY
8	CAVE OF DOOM
9	UNDERGROUND
10	DEATHCHAMBER
11	GOLEMS CAVE
12	HORNSLUT
13	SLIMEHOLE
14	BLOODSMELL
15	BONEPOWDER
16	NIGHTMARE
17	MONSTERBREED
18	THUNDERSTORM
19	CREEPY CAVE
20	LIQUIDATION
21	MEGAMAZE
22	STRATAGEM

HACKER II (Activision)

Especially for all those who've splashed out on a copy of Virgin's *Now Games 5* compilation, here's some crucial codes for you to enter when prompted to LOGON PLEASE . . .

00987
TITLE
DEMO
COVER
PAM
WAMI
DAME
GOMES

Plus! Some codes to enter during the game . . .

RED7
WHITE6
BLUE1
WHITE50
07041776

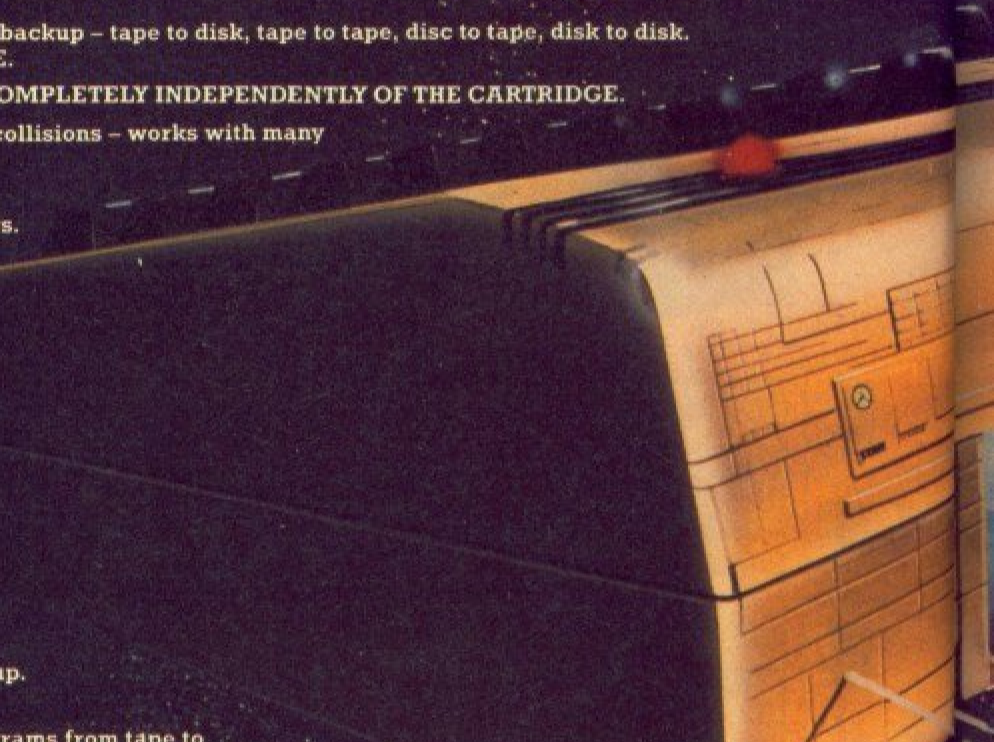
play to WIN

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- **FAST FILE COPY.** Works with standard and Warp 25 files of up to 249 blocks. Converts formats to and from Warp 25.
- **FAST FORMAT.** Under 20 seconds.
- **TOOLKIT COMMANDS.** A whole range of useful new commands including: AUTO LINE NUMBERING, DELETE, MERGE, APPEND, OLD, LINESAVE, etc., PRINTERLISTER – list any program (including directory) directly from disk to printer or screen without corrupting memory.
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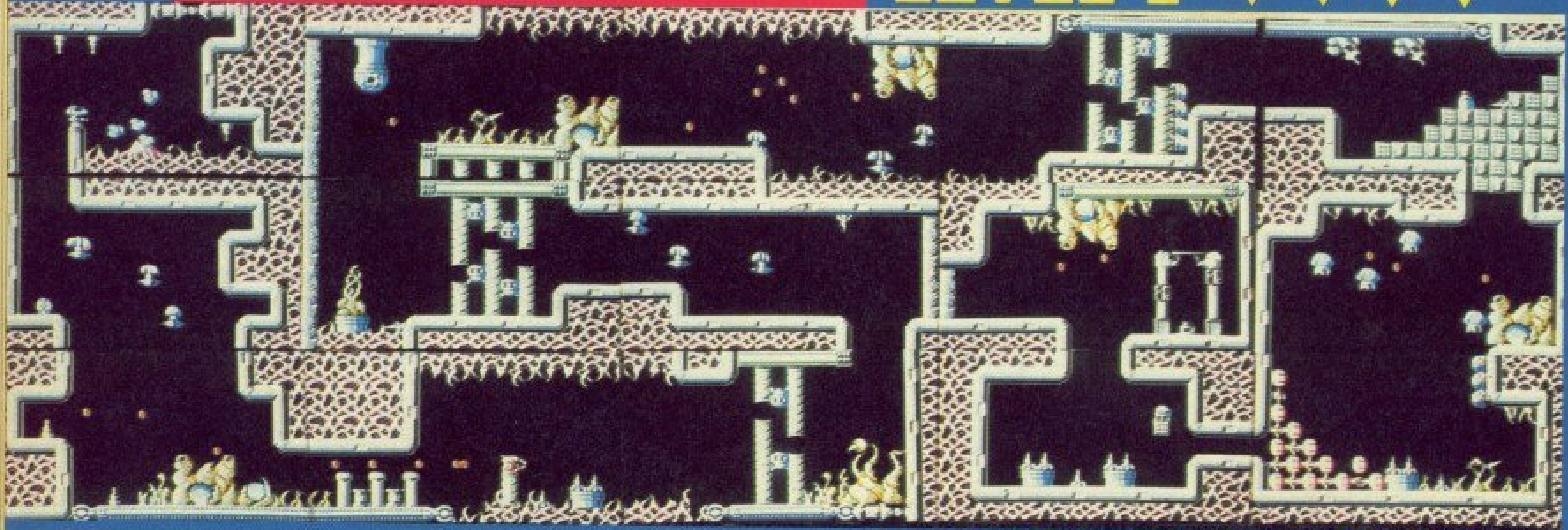
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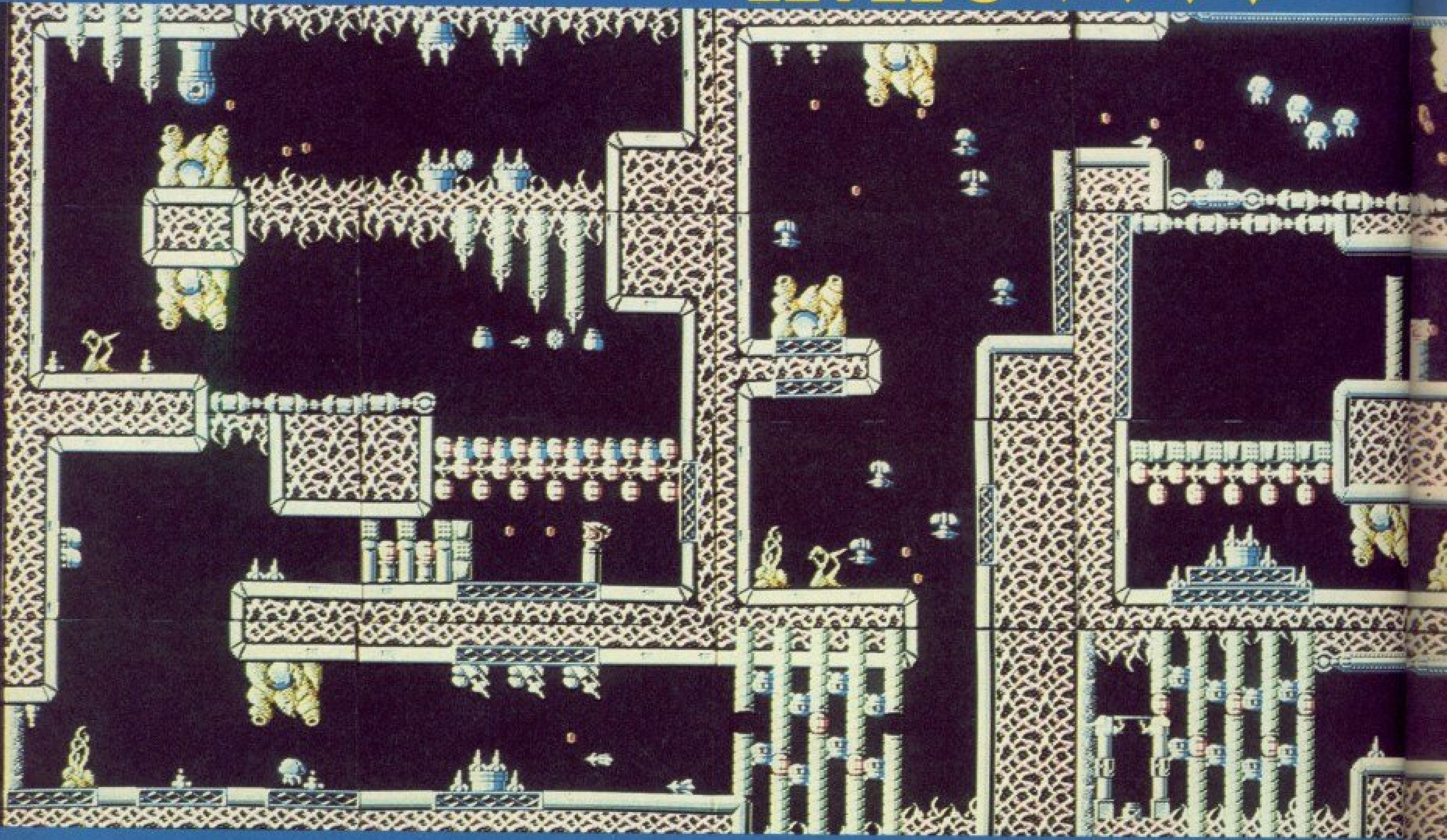
If you've ever wanted to know what's small and yellow and doesn't like liver, this map isn't going to be much help. If, however you've ever wanted to complete Hewson's super-slick Screen Star *Cybernoid,* then this is certainly the man for the job. Use the listing on the cheatcard which might be on the front of this issue (if not, ask your friends) for infinite lives, and with a smidgeon of luck, a dollop of pure skill — and, of course, this map, you should be able to sail through the three levels. It looks pretty, too.

CYBER

LEVEL 1

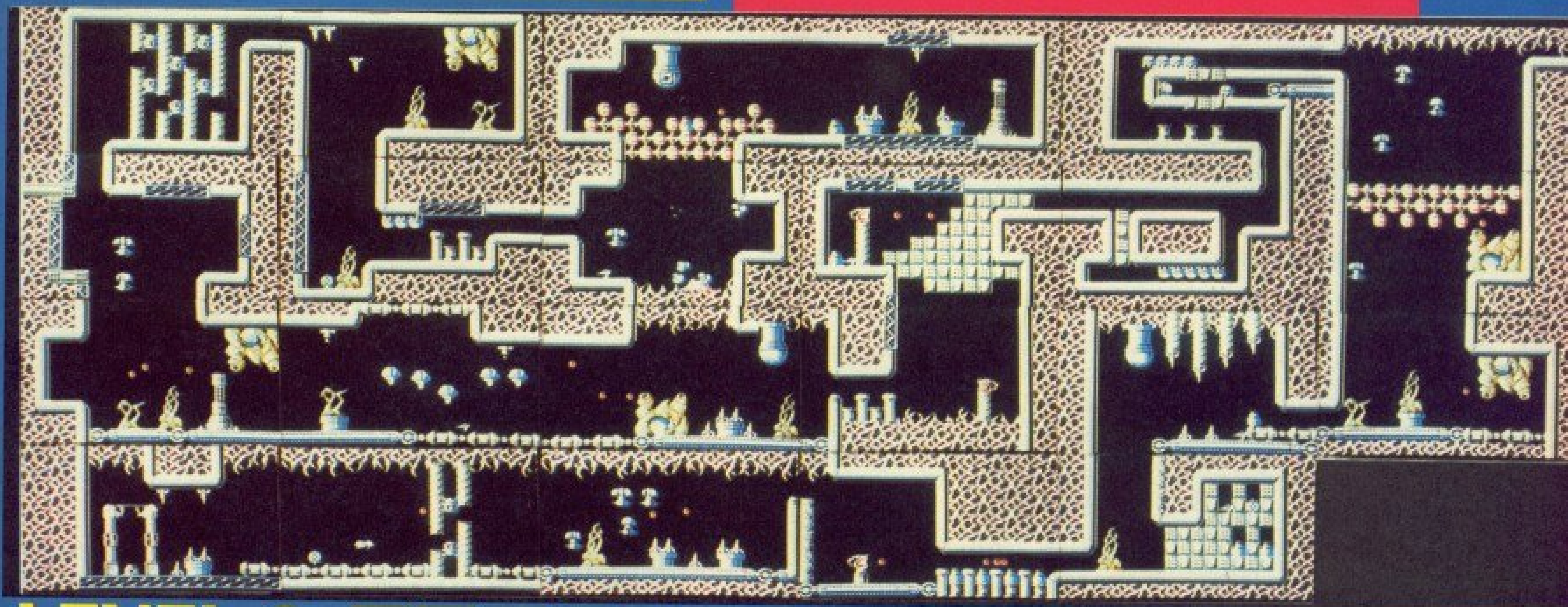


LEVEL 3

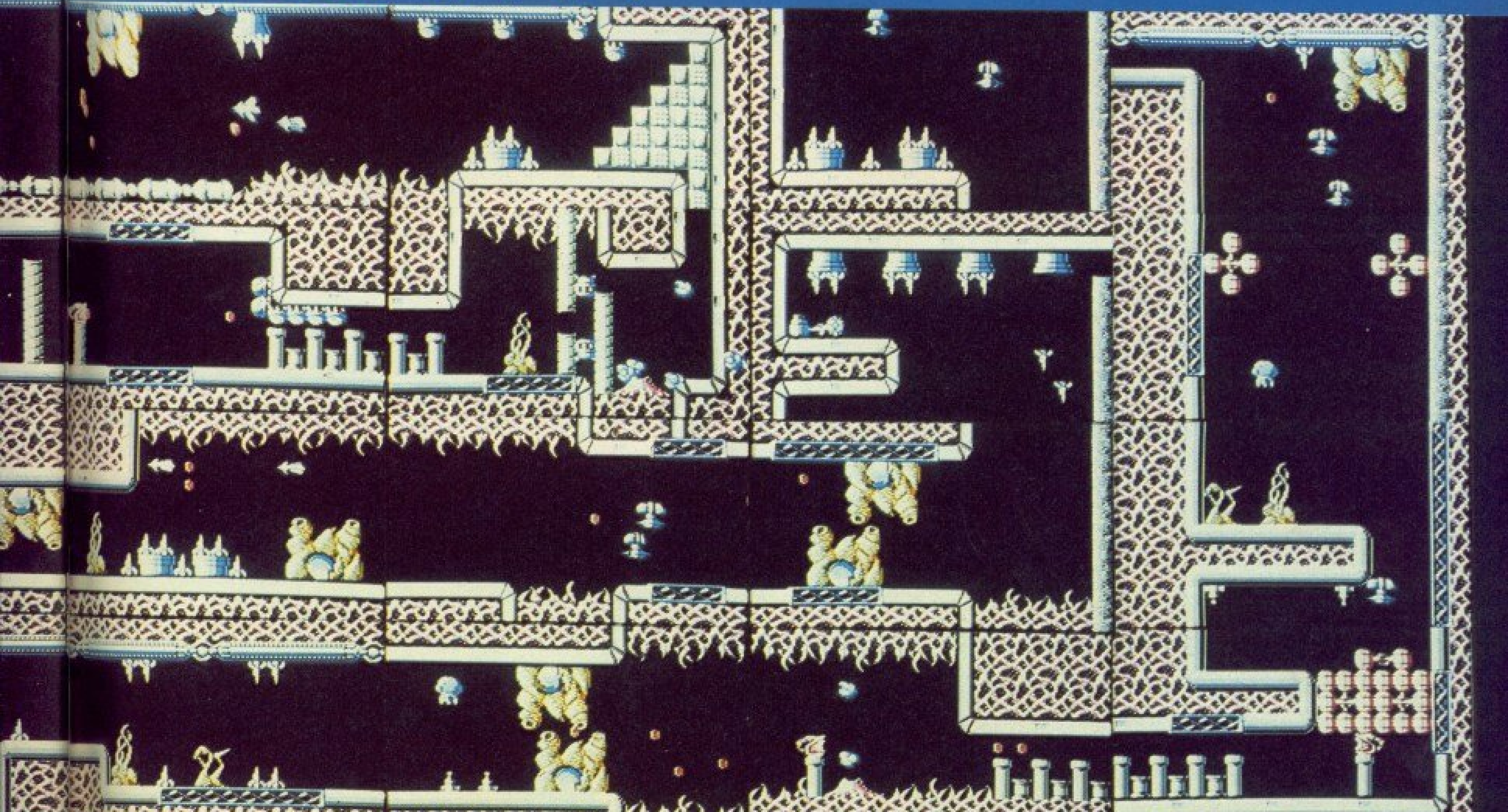


RNOID

play TO WIN



LEVEL 2

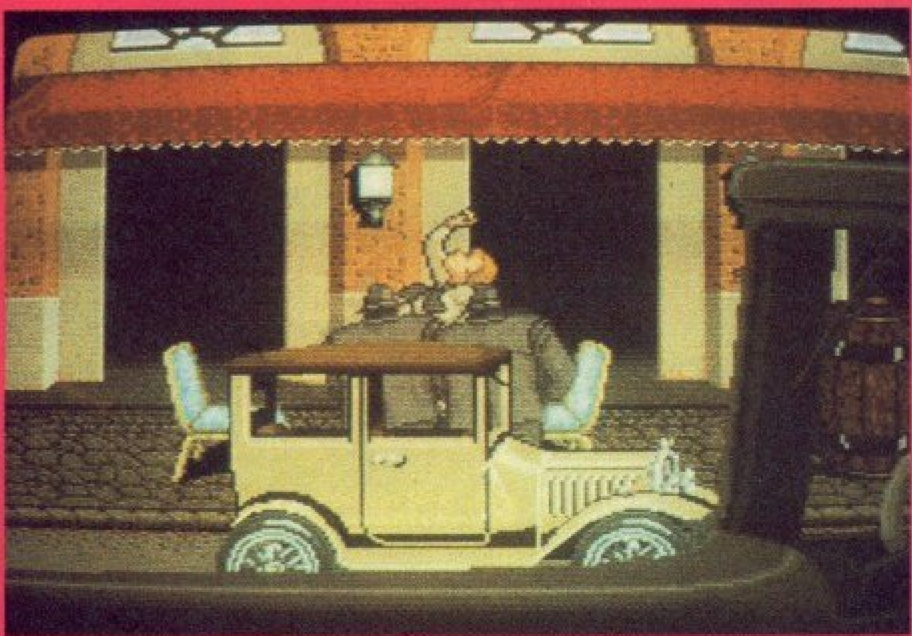


SEIBU 2 x 10p

DEAD ANGLE



An alleyload of Tommy-gunners



Your damsel snatched by the family



One down, one to go.

With the huge popularity of Taito's *Operation Wolf*, it was only to be expected that there'd be a boom in "shooting range"-style coin-ops. What I must say I didn't expect was that we'd get such a classy variation on the theme from the previously unheard of Seibu corporation.

Dead Angle doesn't boast a mounted machine pistol. Instead, you're represented, *Heavyweight Champ*-like, by a yellow, fedora-ed silhouette, with a gunsight taking the place of *HC*'s boxing gloves.

The game kicks off in Napoli (Naples, dolt) where you arrive at a street side cafe just in time to see a broad being kidnapped by some sinister "family" members and drive off in a mob car. Now, though you're pretty quiet about it, this young lady must mean a lot to you — you're prepared to take on the entire Cosa Nostra, on both sides of the Atlantic (and in the middle!) to get her back.

So it's out with your trusty shooter, and you've to take on your first family, the local Napoli toughs. You won't have far to look — the sidewalk is swarming with 'em, crouched behind barrels, skulking in doorways, using cars, tables, pillars, lampposts and anything else they can find for cover as they blast away at you.

You can scroll yards in either direction and the basic rule here is kill everybody you come across. Either the entire population of Naples (and New York, and Chicago) is a member of the Mafia or they've arranged, thoughtfully, to clear the streets of octogenarians and prams before the showdown. You won't meet any goodies here — everyone's out for your blood.

You have to clear the entire level of hoods (there are an average of 40 on each one) in order to proceed on to the next stage of your quest, unless you manage to take out the local *capo di tutti*, in which case you get to move on straight away. And, as you'd expect, the bosses are not east to pin down and — whether due to their devilish luck, or cunningly concealed personal armour — they're very tough to take out.

You start out with a rather humble revolver but every time you manage to take out one of the red-suited

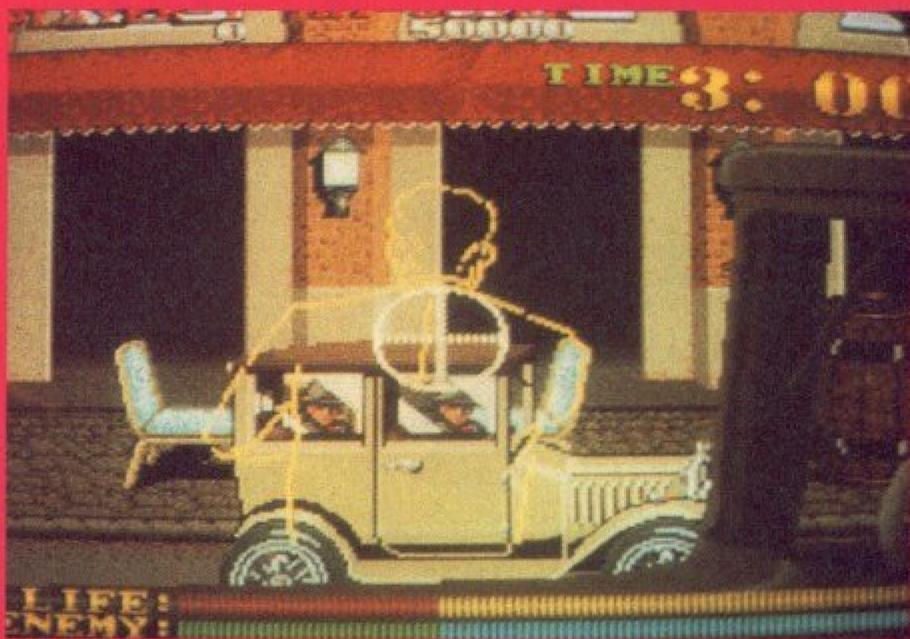
ADES



The last thing you'll ever see, matey.



Blowing away a Family man.



Leaving the scene of their crime.

machine-gunners, an icon will appear offering you either a machine gun, a shot gun or an extra grenade. You start off with just three grenades per life, so you have to use them sparingly.

Sadly, the family don't have to worry about any ammo shortages. They have handguns, machine guns, grenades and even rocket launchers, and plenty of 'em. You've got a health meter at the bottom of the screen together with an enemy meter. You start out with your silhouette a hearty (?) shade of yellow but as you take a few hits and your health level drops, you turn red. Each member of the family that you knock out reduces the enemy level — whoever reaches zero first loses out.

As they roll and weave in and out of cover — very *Operation Wolf*-y you'll notice that you can blow certain objects away if you pump at them long enough. Oil barrels take a lot of blasting, wooden ones less, and windows shatter pretty much straight away. As each level wears on, the scenery begins to look decidedly battered, with broken glass, splintered wood, chipped stone and twisted metal dotted about, and bullet holes everywhere.

If you make it out of Naples, you then have to take on another family on the deck of the trans-Atlantic ship. Next scene finds you on the docks of New York, scanning upwards to blow snipers out of berthed ships, and avoiding mobsters hidden amongst the unloaded cargo. With a lot of luck and a numb shooting finger, you'll then have to take out a whole nest of the blighters wandering around your midtown hotel, including a boss whom you encounter behaving in a most undignified and dangerous manner, leaping and bounding about in front of the lifts and throwing spikes in your direction.

If and when you check out of this most unfriendly establishment, you next head for a hoedown showdown in a Kansas farm with some rural Mafiosi, and after that it's north to Chicago where you have to clear a luxurious mobster mansion of gunmen. Finally you have a showdown with the Big Boss — I'd tell you a little more about him if his underlings hadn't prevented our actual meeting.

Throughout the game the graphics are excellent, with many clever little touches and details which you'll probably miss first time round.

Apart from its own qualities, *Dead Angle* also gives a clue as to how Imagine may convert *Operation Wolf*: this game proves uncontrovertably that the silhouette-and-gunsight blast 'em up can, if well done, be almost an invigorating as pumping away with a mounted Uzi. *(and who's that remark supposed to refer to? Ed).*

Nick Kelly

GRAPHICS:	8
SOUND:	7
TOUGHNESS:	7
ENDURANCE:	8
VALUE:	8
OVERALL:	8

ADES

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS

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(watch this each month)

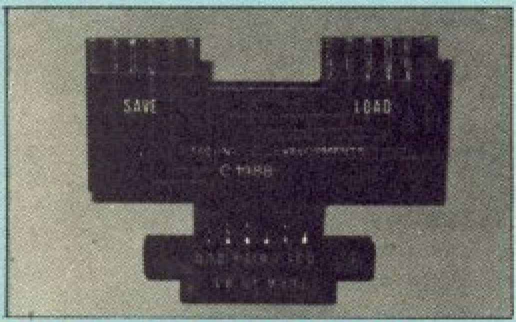
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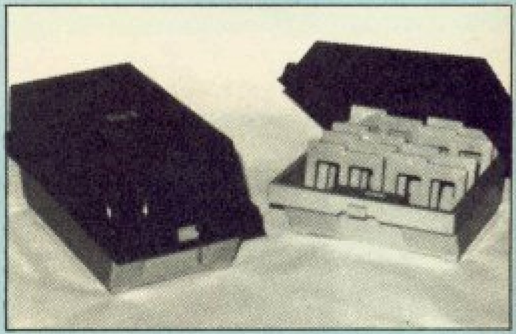
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Ninjette fends off the hunchback of the sidestreets.

GRAPHICS:	9
SOUND:	7
TOUGHNESS:	7
ENDURANCE:	8
CONVERTABILITY:	5
OVERALL:	8

TAITO
(3 × 10p)

NINJA WARRIORS



Leap to avoid the monster tank's turret guns.

Undeterred by the fairly lukewarm reaction to their three-screens-in-a-row shoot 'em up debut of last year, *Darius*, Taito have just produced another game which makes use of this extra long upright cabinet. But this time, though you'll be aware of them crossing from one screen to another, the joins don't actually distort the path of shells coming for you. What's more, the graphic brilliance of *Ninja Warriors* will, for most people, more than make up for any minor complaints about the joins.

But first, Jim, your mission. You play one of a choice of two ninja entrusted with the task of taking on what seems like an entire country's combined military services, criminal organisations and zoos. You can play in one or two player mode. The two ninja figures are a blue clad bloke and a very sassy red-clad woman ninja, who carries her hair in a long red ponytail.

You both stride through town with that unique, cocky Bruce Lee-style gait, arms akimbo and toes thrust aggressively skywards. The streets you're cruising so nonchalently through are splendidly seedy, and scrolling by in the backgrounds are the skyscrapers and office blocks of the better part of town.

But all this scenery is of no interest to you — you've got your eyes peeled for the first sign of danger. Your folded arms conceal a couple of lethal weapons. For close, hand-to-hand fighting you can use a pair of daggers, while for longer distance dissing, you've got a limited number of throwing knives and shurikens.

The first groups of foes you encounter are military, soldiers running at you armed with knives from both sides of the screen. These, truth to tell, are not particularly tough to deal with — just turn in the appropriate direction in time and cut 'em. If you waste your precious throwing knives at this point, you'll regret it.

Behind these groups of dagger fodder there is sometimes a marksman or two. Once again, however, these lads are not really top drawer — they only shoot along one plane, so if you simply crouch down you'll be immune to them. You can easily sidle up to them and stab them if you remain in the crouching "on the hunkers" position. In fact I found that, uncomfortable as it may initially seem, this position was the best stance to use for many of your attackers.

There are however, far more deadly foes to be encountered. Hunchback babboons jump down from crumbling wall tops and these boys are tough to get rid of. They need plenty of shooting and frustrate you by springing backwards to avoid your blows. Unless you fancy having your energy meter diminished alarmingly, it's best not to spend too long dealing with these ape-fiends at close quarters.

Another nasty to be wary of is the purple-clad hoodlum who lurks in garages and behind rubble, ducking out to loose off a couple of rounds of automatic rifle fire. Quite what connection this mobster has with the opposing army, or, for that matter, with deformed primates, isn't clear, but what is for certain is that if you don't leap high to avoid his low-skimming bullets, he's going to do you damage.

You have got a certain level of tolerance — and some personal armour — but neither will last longer than a few blows.

And, no, *Ninja Warriors* doesn't get any easier as you go along, though it does get even prettier. For as you encounter still greater perils in the shape of mortars, concealed land mines, oversized punks and semi-invisible samurai, the backgrounds move from scruffy streets to airfields, with an incredibly huge starfighter in the background. One of your toughest foes is an enormous tank, which literally occupies a whole normal sized screen. This monster trundles back and forth, with a gunman periodically poking his head out of the turret and loosing off bursts of machine gun fire at you. You've got to leap onto the moving ironclad, avoid this tracer, and throw an accurate shuriken at the man in the turret.

In gameplay, there are many similarities between *Ninja Warriors* and the recently reviewed Sega game, *Shinobi*. The graphics, and the overall effect of the giant screen, however, put this ahead. Highly playable, gorgeous looking and, technologically speaking, a successful step futurewards, I can't see *Ninja Warriors* failing to be a coin-op hit — unless, that is, arcade owners prove reluctant to shift three of their existing uprights to install it.

Nick Kelly

ATARI 3×10p

VINDICATORS

What do you get if you cross *Gauntlet*-style gameplay, real live tank controls and a spaceage scenario? Something akin to this new upright from Atari, perhaps.

Vindicators, for one or two players, puts you in control of a small futuristic ironclad blasting your way through a series of enemy space stations. Or, rather, it puts you in *charge* of said machine — *control* you have to work hard to acquire.

All steering, firing and smart bombing functions are carried out by skilful — or otherwise — manipulation of a pair of joysticks. You push right to rotate right, left to rotate left, and both in the same direction simultaneously to move in a specific direction. Minute variations in the amount of force applied to one or other of the joysticks will alter your direction. I'm assured by my bellicose Ed that this is indeed how tanks are controlled, and all I can say is that those magnificent men in their trundling machines must have far better coordination than I ever gave them credit for.

There are also fire buttons located in the "trigger" position of each 'stick (controlling cannon and smart bombs) and turret rotate buttons housed in the joystick head, operated by your thumbs.

These controls are not the easiest to cope with. In the beginning, you don't have any turret rotate functions — you have to earn points to "buy" this enhancement, and, frankly, until you're fairly adept at coping with getting the tank itself to move when and where you want it, you're better off without.

The object of the game is to make your way past the various enemy vehicles, gun towers, mines and hover-fighters, picking up fuel for survival, stars for enhancements and special weapon icons en route, and escaping through an exit. There are two exits on each level and you need a key for each — a red key opens the red door, and a blue one opens the blue. Sometimes these keys are fairly obviously located, towards the end of the level but, especially as the game progresses, you start having to blast turrets to reveal the hidden key you need.

You have a shield which gives you limited protection from shelling but



Six seconds to get across the control room to the exit.



Three alien bots blasted, one to

CONTINENTAL CIRCUS

TAITO 3×10p

While there have been occasional attempts to spice up the formula a bit in the end most coin-op companies do seem to resign themselves to the fact that you can't meddle very much with the basic concept of car games: driving around bends, avoiding obstacles and finishing the course within a certain time.

Most of the developments which we've witnessed in the last eighteen months have, therefore, been aimed at making the games more realistic, rather than radically changing or enhancing the basic idea. The innovation that makes Taito's *Continental Circus* special doesn't involve very much in the way of new hardware — all it uses is a pair of goggles which hang down from the ceiling of the large stationary sit-down console. But when you adjust them to your height, insert your coinage and press the start button, the difference becomes apparent: *Continental Circus* is the first ever coin-op with 3D vision. And, even more happily, it's well worth playing in its own right, technical achievements aside.

The deal is this: you're competing on the world Formula One circuit. You start out with a ranking of 100, and lining up for the first of your Grand Prix challenges, the Brazilian.

You start off, and are soon overtaking cars and hurtling around bends with the rest of the competitors. There are two meters here to keep your eyes on; the standard lap timer which counts down towards zero — if you want to keep playing, you've got to pass an extra time stage or the finishing line before it gets there — and a ranking counter. Each time you pass one of your rivals, or he crashes or spins off the track, you move up a place. This



The fire's out, so quit the pits.


An explosion so good, it's near

ARCA

ADES



one to go

…a short bonus phase in the …ice station's control room where …u have ten seconds to pick up fuel …ds and enhancement stars, and to …ke good your escape through one …he four room exits before the self …struct mechanism detonates. This …arder than it may first appear as …exits open and close alternately …d randomly.

…After the end of the level, …suming you've picked up …ficient enhancement stars, you …n "buy" extra fire power and …ge, increased shield protection (very useful), turret rotation (as mentioned above, a mixed blessing for the unskilled) and, occassionally, warp passages which allow you skip a level or two.

Fighting in *Vindicators* is fast and furious, and, as the levels become more complex, tactics become essential. Certain enemies can only be destroyed by smart bombing or blasting from a height (grab a ride on one of the lift mechanisms dotted about). Walls appear and disappear, *Gauntlet*-style, as do those nasty grinning mines, and there are also transporter pads which move you about the level. Sometimes it makes sense to flee rather than fight — for example if you're being counted down and the exit is close by, or your opponent happens to be a nasty flying saucer and you don't have any of the special weapons necessary to destroy him.

With graphics that put me in mind of Tron (the film), a larger than average screen, adequately state-of-the-art sounds, and plenty of that seriously stomach-churning tension, *Vindicators* should steal plenty of your ten pees over the coming months — but if coordination isn't your strong point, prepare for some hard lessons.

Nick Kelly

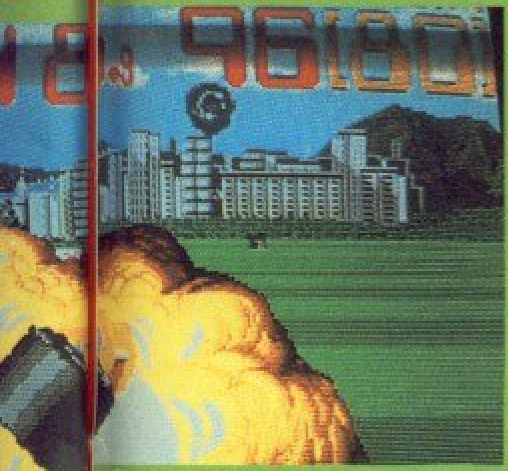
you're at least as likely to expire from lack of fuel. If there are two of you playing, you should attempt to share the fuel pods you come across along socialist lines (i.e. to each according to their needs). When you're running low a nasty throbbing sound, like the one you hear in Xybots, warns you that you've got to get to an exit or a pod quickly or else it's death.

At the end of each level you get



Vindicate your way through 14 levels.

GRAPHICS:	7
SOUND:	7
TOUGHNESS:	8
ENDURANCE:	8
CONVERTABILITY:	8
OVERALL:	7


…s nearly …orth crashing for.

isn't just for honour and glory either — if you don't get your ranking down to 80 in the first event, you don't qualify for the next Grand Prix event, in America.

Actually, it's when one of the rivals does spin off the track, or when you yourself come a cropper, that the 3D effect becomes really spectacular: there's a mighty explosion and pieces of debris, metal and tyres fly towards you.

Even glancing off another car or a trackside object starts your car smoking. With this the "pits" icon appears and an ominous throbbing noise warns you that if you don't pull into the pits soon, you're liable to explode. There are a couple of pit stops along each course. When you pull into one a slick team of mechanics leap out to give your car a quick going-over. If your problem is mechanical — induced by bumping into someone or something — out come the fire extinguishers. If, as frequently, and spectacularly, happens, rain starts to lash down, you'll be asked to pull in and change your tyres.

Of course, you don't have to obey the icons — if you're right at the end of a stage you'd be a bit of a donkey to pull in just to have your tyres changed. But if you don't have rain tyres in the rain and good weather ones when the sun is out, you'll find your speed and control overall are reduced, and if you carry on with engine problems for very long you're gonna go BOOM.

Graphics and sound throughout are both up to the very high standard that's become expected of costly dedicated driving games. I particularly liked the leggy blonde who flagged me past the finishing post with a brilliant smile when I'd got my ranking sufficiently increased to compete in the next race, but glared at me, hands on hips, and chewing gum, when I just failed. The story of my life, really.

Nick Kelly

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
TOUGHNESS	6
ENDURANCE	8
CONVERTIBILITY	8
OVERALL	8

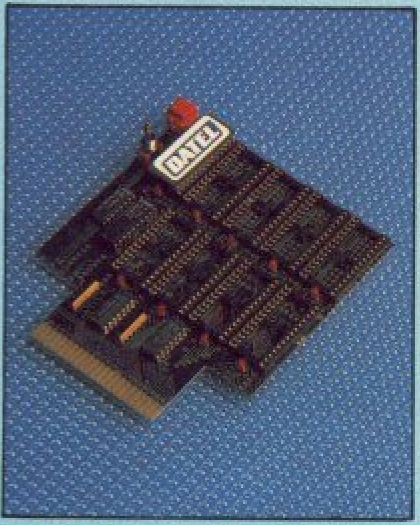

Continental cab, complete with model and 3D spex.

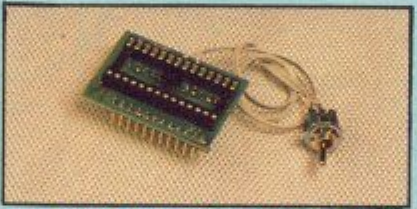
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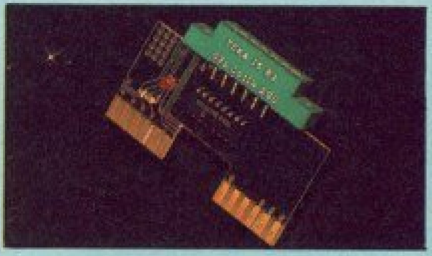


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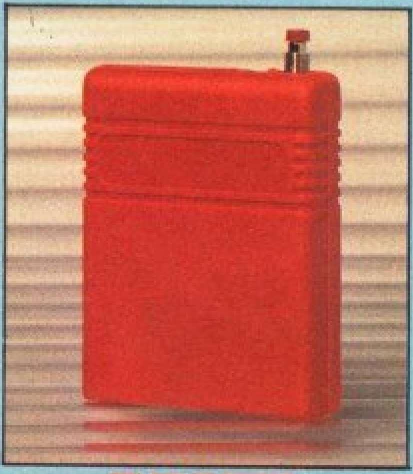
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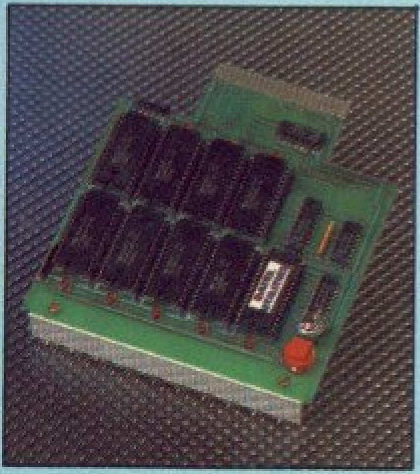
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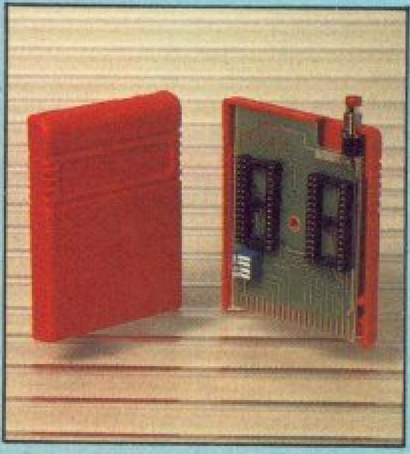
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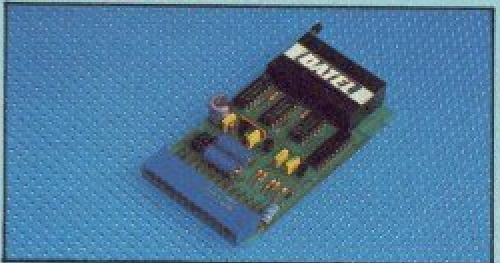
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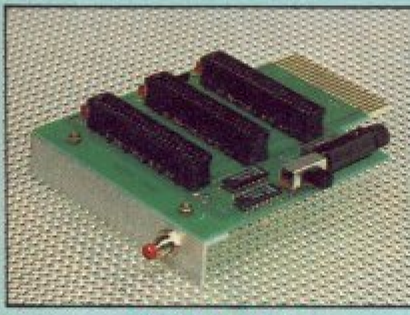


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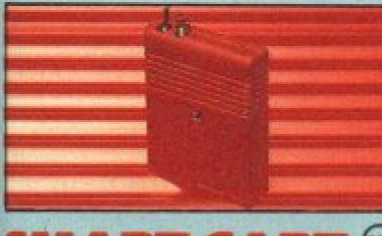
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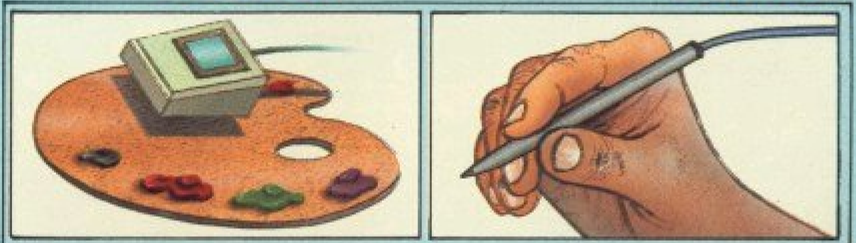
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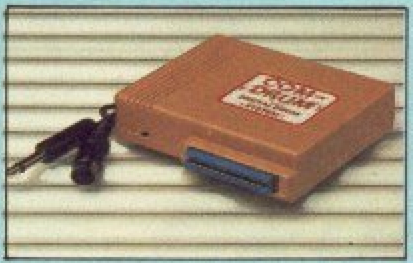
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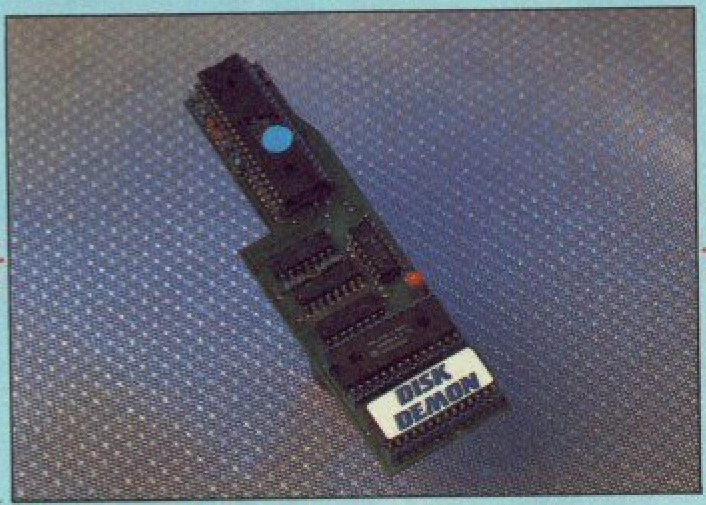
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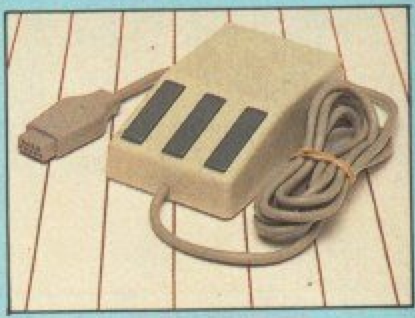


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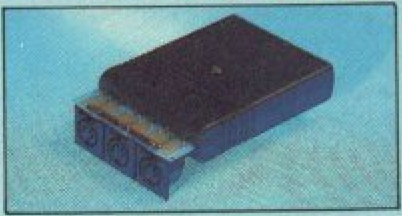
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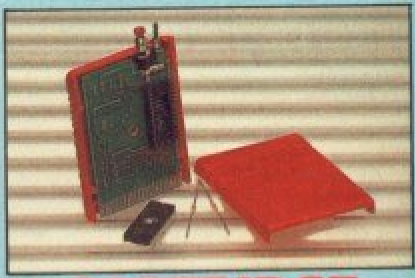


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NEXT

SALAMANDER EXCLUSIVE

NEXT MONTH CU

If you've been with us that long you'll know that it was CU who brought you the first review of Konami's *Nemesis* conversion back in March '87. Well Ocean have *Salamander* ready for release (see Buzz) and we've got it! And what's more we've acquired (with Ocean's help) a coin-op to give away in a great compo!



NEW BLOOD!

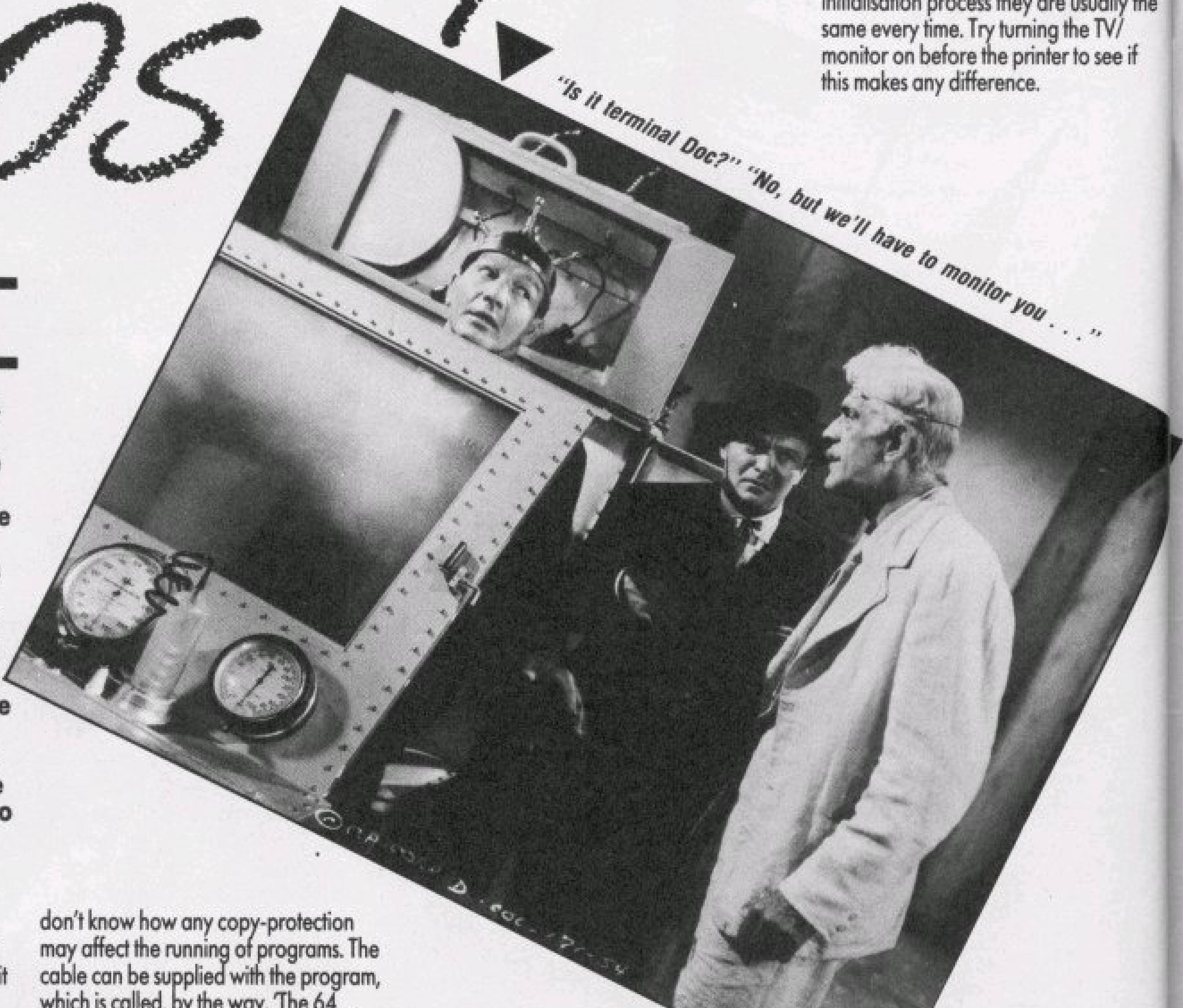
In the biggest transfer coup since Barnes and Beardsley went to Liverpool, CU has swooped for ZZAP! and Crash eds Julian Rignall and Steve Jarratt! The two erstwhile Newsfield midfield dynamos will be working for CU doing reviews and hints and tips. Three nil! Three nil! Three nil!

AND THE REST

The bit everyone takes for granted. The best reviews first, top Amiga coverage, hot tips, adventures, arcades reviews second to none. At a quid and a bit that's a steal. See you June 26th. We can't wait! Can you?

MONTH

Tommy's Tips



"Is it terminal Doc?" "No, but we'll have to monitor you . . ."

Emulator

I was about to sell my 64 and buy an A500, but I have been looking at the cost of the Amiga games programs and they are much more expensive than those for the 64. I also have things like WP programs and spreadsheets on the 64 which I still use quite a lot and it is going to cost a fortune to replace them with equivalent programs on the Amiga. I have heard rumours about a software program that allows you to run 64 programs on the Amiga. Is this possible and if so how much does it cost?
T Evans,
London N16

The answer to your question is a qualified 'Yes'; there is a 64 emulation program available for the Amiga and it costs about £50. One reason why I qualify my answer is that the program is, as far as I know, only available in America, although I have no doubt that it won't be long before someone is is marketing it over here. The contact address if you are interested is Readysoft, PO Box 122, Lewisham, NY14092.

The second reason for qualification is that you should not expect the same sort of performance from the emulation as from your 64. In case that seems like a contradiction, you must remember that anything other than simple text (such as Sprites) has to be 'reconstructed' by the emulation program, thus slowing the processing down considerably. Thus arcade type games are unlikely to be successful when you run them on the Amiga. However, any WP programs or spreadsheets should be capable of being used without too much problem and data files can be ported across and then stored on the Amiga.

One point to note is in order to transfer the software you must have a disk drive and the correct connecting cable. The cable allows the 1541 to be connected to the Amiga, although I don't know how any copy-protection may affect the running of programs. The cable can be supplied with the program, which is called, by the way, 'The 64 Emulator', but then what else would they have called it?

Hashed up

I have a CBM 128 computer with a parallel printer connected through an interface. When I use a word-processor I invariably get a gash character printed right at the start of the first page. It's not too annoying as it only happens once, but I can't find out what is causing it — can you help?
A. Murphy,

There are at least two possible causes for this and a little experimentation should allow you to work out the probable one. Firstly, does the problem only occur with the word-processor program? If it does then it looks very much like the initialisation sequence in the printer driver. You need to check the printer manual for the correct sequence to 'reset' the printer and then ensure that the printer driver for the word-processor sends the correct sequence before it does any printing. Also be careful of any files you may have ported across from a previous machine, or created for use with another printer; embedded control codes can also produce similar effects if you change printers to one which is not totally 'control-code' compatible with your previous one (changing from a Commodore printer to a Epson-type printer is a classic example!).

If however, the printer-produces the gash character irrespective of whether you are using the WP program or not, then suspect the interface. Some interfaces, expecially when in 'Commodore Emulation' mode can actually alter the correct codes to the wrong codes when using certain switch settings; check the DIP switch settings if it has them. Some of the fancier interfaces also have their own initialisation sequence when they are powered up and this has been known to produce gash characters on some printers.

The final possibility is a mains spike. If you turn your TV/monitor on *after* the printer, this can cause a spike even past a filter plug and many printers are very sensitive to spikes. The tell-tale sign will be that the gash characters are usually different, whereas with an incompatible initialisation process they are usually the same every time. Try turning the TV/ monitor on before the printer to see if this makes any difference.

Print facilities

Please, please help me. I have a Commodore 64, a 1571 drive, a Panasonic KX-P1081 printer with a Turboprint GT interface and *Easy Script*. I would like to know if it is possible for me to use the facilities available on this printer, eg: italic, bold and emphasised printing as all the instructions use either LPRINT or PRINT#1.
J.E. Paterson,
Slough,
Berks

I assume that you are talking about the instructions given in your printer manual

showing you how to obtain the facilities with LPRINT etc. The fact is that it doesn't matter how the code (or ESCAPE) sequences are sent, it is the codes themselves that are important. Thus from a BASIC program, or in direct mode, you OPEN a channel to the printer and then PRINT the codes to the printer as if you were sending text, but with the codes being preceded by CHR$(27), which is the ASCII for the ESCape character. When using a word-processor you must ensure that the codes which the program sends out are the correct ones for the printer.

There is a slight problem with *Easy Script* in that it is not possible to set up your own printer driver (at least, not on the original version I have) so if the printer you have doesn't emulate one of the options on the printer selection then you may not be able to get at all the facilities. If you can embed control codes within the text then this is one way round the problem, but with multi-character ESC sequences this can get very messy. For example, to get italic text on any Epson-compatible printer you must send the ESC sequence CHR$(27);CHR$(52); and then CHR$(27);CHR$(53); to turn it off again. These pairs of control chars would need to be inserted either side of the text you wanted to be printed in italics.

Upgrader

I am thinking of upgrading to an Amiga 500 from a C128. I have read quite a lot about the actual technical specification, but there are several other matters that concern me:

Firstly, price. I have heard rumours that the A500 is due to drop in price some time this year. If this is true, what is the new price likely to be?

Also, I want to know how much cheaper (if at all) it will work out if I buy a monitor with the computer, as opposed to waiting and buying one later. Which monitor would be best to get if I want to display all the colours at a reasonable resolution, and have stereo sound (if this is possible without plugging the computer into a MIDI system).

Lastly, I am quite worried about VIRUS, as it appears to be affecting several machines in my area, and I was wondering how serious it really is. I mean, is it worth buying an ST instead of an Amiga because of it, or can it be easily removed from the computer without much knowledge or machine code. Also, can it be found on any software?

Adrian Joyce, Huntingdon

I always make it a rule never to make predictions regarding the price of computers — that way lies madness and an inevitable barrage of complaints when Murphy's Law guarantees I get it wrong!! If the computer you want seems good value and you can afford it, then buy it. That said, there seems little likelihood of Commodore dropping the price this year.

As for monitors, the Philips 8852 is very good, but if you buy a complete system including the monitor then you may be able to get a better 'all-in' deal on the A1081, Commodore's own monitor. I use an A1081 for all my computing, including a portable IBM-clone, and find it more than adequate. If your really want *good* stereo sound, then you don't need a MIDI system, just a portable stereo cassette player. One of the problems with stereo sound on all the monitors is that the speakers face sideways rather than forwards. This can have the effect of upsetting the stereo image, so I always play my sound through a hi-fi instead.

Lastly, the dreaded virus. The thing to remember is that a virus cannot pass through plastic!! If you buy commercial software then check that the plastic seal is unbroken; if it is then you are quite safe. The danger occurs when you 'borrow' software from other people, whose disks may well be 'contaminated'. However, most of the virus strains are easily removed and if you always keep the write protect tabs open on your disks except when you actually need to write to them, this will also help to avoid the virus spreading. Software swapping is definitely a major cause of spreading the problem, but if you limit your copying to disks you have purchased then you are quite safe.

Decoder

Taking advantage of the Sept offer, I upgraded from my trusty 64 to the Amiga.

Could you please explain whether there is a fault with this computer or is it something I am doing wrong, as neither Commodore UK themselves or the dealer are interested in replying to any of my letters.

From the introduction book I tried typing in a message on the note pad, however everytime I pressed the M key the following happened.

/.,MNBVCXZ<

This appears to be printing out the full row where the 'M' resides.

There is a key for each row like this.

The U key produces the following;

][POIUYTREWQ

And the J key;

'LKHGFDSA

Could you please explain this as it doesn't seem possible to program under the circumstances, I might add that all professional programs run fine.

B Haig, Welwyn Garden City, Herts

This is almost certainly due to a fault on the keyboard decoding chip or possibly the keyboard scanning circuit. Basically, the keyboard is split into a series of logical blocks and the keys are recognised by their position in a matrix of wires. Some of these wires, or connections, are common for all keys in a block and so the electronics scans through the keys looking for a signal on more than one connection to identify a unique key. However, if all the keys in a block appear to be giving a signal because of a fault, then you will get the effect you mention. You only mention notepad, but the same effect should occur no matter what program or routine you are in, if there really is a fault.

Programs that do not require the use of the keyboard will of course run correctly, as will some which only require you to press 'a key'; ie: it is not bothered which key. Also, some programs take just the first key pressed and ignore any subsequent keys, and these will also run. However, this is of little consequence since there does appear to be a major fault and you should return the machine to the supplier for repair/replacement at the earliest opportunity.

Cartridge query

I'm a C64 owner and admittedly only use my Commodore for games. All the software is on cassette. Since I can't afford a disk drive my main gripe is that of painfully slow loading times. Therefore, is it possible to considerably quicken up loading times by using any of the cartridge systems, eg: the "Action Replay Mark IV". If so, which would you recommend and what speed gain would you be talking about, say for an average six minute loading time?

Joseph McCabe, Belfast

Both the 'Final Cartridge III' and 'Action Replay IV' contain a turbo loader for your cassettes. The actual choice is really whether you want the fancy programs of F-CIII or the monitor and Warp-25 option of the A-RIV. If you don't have a disk drive then many of the options on both cartridges are going to be wasted, so decide which options you want and then get the cartridge that provides them.

One point to note when using turbo loaders is that your tape deck and tapes *must* be in good condition and correctly aligned in order to achieve consistant results. The actual gains that you can expect with either cartridge are between six and ten times, which means that your six minute program should load in under a minute.

Mega enquiry

After just saying good bye to my beloved CBM 128 I am now on the verge of buying an A500 Amiga, but before I go rushing out and spend all my hard earned pennies on it, there are a few things I would like to know:

1. I have heard that Commodore is to launch a new A500 with one meg memory as standard, do you think it is better to buy the new machine or the old version with an A501 ram pack?

2. On the Amiga the A501 plugs into the underside of the machine giving 1 meg, is it possible to plug in more than one RAM pack, if so how many?

3. I own an Epson RX80, is it possible to connect this to the Amiga?

P.S. Please can you print this letter, as it could mean the difference between an Amiga or an Atari 520 STFM.

Leonard Costa, Nottingham

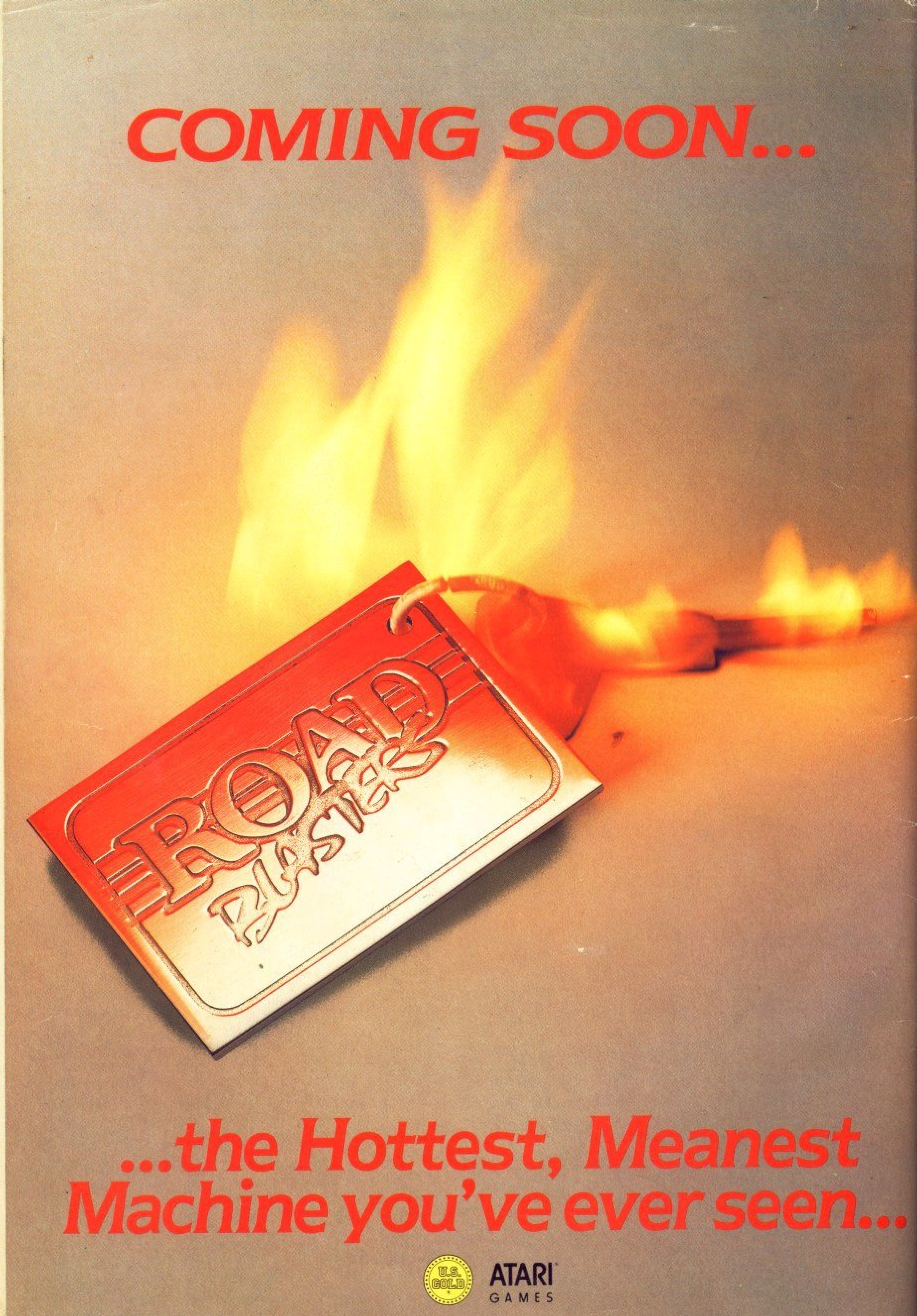
My personal advice is to buy what is available. There will *always* be a better computer 'just around the corner'.

The current version can only fit one A501 RAM pack, but there is now a new RAM board available for the A500 which fits *inside* the computer and will allow up to 8 Mbytes of RAM to be fitted. The boards are the EXP range and come with 512 kbytes, 1 Mbyte or 2 Mbytes of RAM. The last of these is the one that can be expanded to the full addressing capability of the Amiga prices are around US$170 for the 512k version and US$400 for the 1 Mbyte version — I don't know the UK prices yet. As for the RX-80, this will fit the standard parallel port without any problem and should work quite happily with the FX-80 option in the printer driver selection.



AND
ARG
WARNING. THIS MONTHS THRILLING EPISODE OF GAS SHOWS HORRIFIC SCENES OF ANIMAL ABUSE AND BRUTAL TEASING OF EX FIGHTER PILOTS, THE SQUEAMISH HAVE BEEN WARNED.......
GO ON ELVIS... GO ON MATE TELL THEM WHAT YOUR LIKE. GO ON... TELL THEM, GO ON!
IM PSYCHOTIC!!
STOP TAKING THE MICKY. THIS IS A SERIOUS SITUATION ... YOU FOOLS ARE IN BIG TROUBLE!
YOU WANT US TO JUMP ON THEIR SPINES A BIT MR WEIGHT!!
YES, WHY NOT OFFICER DEATH ....A LITTLE POLICE BRUTAUTY WOULDN'T GO A MISS, WHAT DO YOU SAY IAN N ELVIS, ARE YOU GONNA WISE UP, OR SHALL I HAND PICK YOUR TOMBSTONE'S
LET ME AT THE FLYBOY!
YOU WOULDNT DARE YOU KNOW HOW POPULAR ME 'N' IAN ARE AROUND HERE!
YUP! HE'S RIGHT WEIGHT. YOU STOMP ON US AND OUR FRIEND'S WILL RIP YOUR'E HEAD OFF!
THATS RIGHT, RIP YOUR'E BLOOMIN HEAD OFF THEY WILL, CO'S ME 'N' IAN HAVE GOT MILLION'S OF FRIENDS!
YIKES! AND HERE'S ONE OF THEM RIGHT NOW!
AND WHEN I'VE FINISHED SKINNING YOU ALIVE, IM GONNA CRUNCH YOUR'E BONES UP AND SET FIRE TO YOUR'E INSIDES!
GRAPPLE!
ENOUGH! OF THIS BANAL CONFRONTATION ARREST THOSE FOOLS!
BUNDLE
YEEEHAAA LETS ROCK!
TAKE YOUR'E BEST SHOT FLATHEAD
COME ON GOD DAMN YOU
GOD HELP ME! WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO CIVILISED POLICE BRUTALITY?
NEXT UP: LOTS OF RILLY FAB THINGS!
THANKS MUM!


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IK+
ZAPP SIZZLER
RENEGADE
TAITO
the name of the game
RAMPAGE
ACTIVISION
IK+
Call it a sequel...
And you'll land up flat on your back.
They called International Karate: 'the greatest Karate beat 'em up yet' (Commodore User).
And who are we to argue?
But ARCHER MACLEAN has come up with a stunner: A third fighter. An amazing animated background. New moves (including double head-kick and a spectacular backflip). Re-mixed music by ROB HUBBARD.
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The game where the nice guys don't get a look in.
Grab your way through Chicago, punch up New York, and jump on San Francisco.
Three indescribably nasty characters which bear a remarkable likeness to King Kong, Godzilla and Wolf-man, need you to send them on a rampage in an enduring 150 days of destruction, through 50 different cities.
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THE STORY SO FAR...
The evil sorcerer Drax has sworn to wreak an unspeakable doom on the people of the Jewelled City unless Princess Mariana is delivered to him.
However, he has agreed that if a champion can be found who is able to defeat his demonic guardians, the Princess will be released.
From the wastelands of the North, comes an unknown barbarian, a mighty warrior, wielding his broadsword with deadly skill.
Can he vanquish the forces of Darkness and free the Princess?
ONLY YOU CAN SAY...
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